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ABSTRACT

This handbook is a tool that reporters can use to uncover the hidden dimensions of race in public education and ask the right questions about the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Section 1, "Race Revealed", includes "Special Education" (Daniel J. Losen); "Dropout and Graduation Rates" (Daniel J. Losen); "Segregation" (Jacinta Ma and John Yun); and "Sample News Stories: Race Concealed & Revealed in the News" (Jennifer Emiko Boyden). Section 2, "Race and No Child Left Behind," includes "Accountability" (Paul Weckstein); "Testing" (William J. Pittz); "Teacher Quality" (Beverly Cross); and "Reading Instruction" (Harold Berlak). Appended are a glossary of commonly used education terms and an extensive contact list of organizations and individuals who can promote varying perspectives on public education policy and practice. (Contains 89 references.) (SM)

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ED 481 474

reporting on RACE, EDUCATION & NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

a guide for journalists

UD 035 893

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Race and Public Policy Program | Applied Research Center

reporting on

RACE, EDUCATION & NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

a guide for journalists

Race and Public Policy Program ‖ Applied Research Center

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INTRODUCTION

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

Tammy Johnson

NEARLY three decades ago I was a Midwestern transplant with a distinct Southern accent, making my way through the dramas of sixth grade. After thumbing through my textbooks one day, my mother rushed to the principal's office. An educator herself, she recognized that I had been assigned material that was well beneath my ability. Within weeks I would find myself, along with several other children of color, reassessed and assigned to a newly created class.

Looking back on this experience, I recognize how perceptions of a student's ability can create a domino effect. My relegation to remedial courses could easily have led to missing out on richer and more engaging advanced coursework in junior high and high school, which is a springboard for college admission and broader life opportunities. If my mother had not had the expertise and experience to intervene, my classmates and I may have been left to languish in ineffective classrooms, like so many other students of color who fall behind. Some of us may have even become dropouts, failed by the public education system.

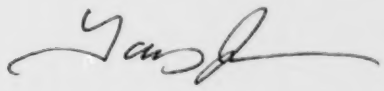
> Racial dynamics are often hidden in media analyses of curriculum, standardized tests, vouchers, or college acceptance rates. Yet in almost every education story, race plays a key role.

If I were to read my story in the newspaper today, I wonder what the focus would be. Would it mention race? Racial dynamics are often hidden in media analyses of curriculum, standardized tests, vouchers, or college acceptance rates. Yet in almost every education story, race plays a key role. In decisions to place students in remedial programs or special education classes, race is proven to be a factor. When standardized exams lead to standardized curricula, the opportunity for multicultural education that engages students of color and helps them build self-esteem is lost. Students of color are almost twice

as likely to attend overcrowded schools and much more likely than white students to be taught by unqualified or uncertified teachers. The list goes on.

This handbook is a tool that reporters can use to uncover the hidden dimension of race in public education and to ask the right questions about No Child Left Behind. The section titled "Race Concealed or Revealed" provides brief snapshots of three key education issues that are influenced by race, including school segregation, special education, and reporting of graduation and dropout rates. It also contains examples of education reporting that conceal and reveal the role of race. The second section, "Race and No Child Left Behind," takes an in-depth look at new federal provisions around testing, accountability, teacher quality, and reading instruction, and how these provisions affect educational quality and equity. The handbook also contains a glossary of terms, and an extensive contact list of organizations and individuals who can provide varying perspectives on public education policy and practice.

How media analyze and portray the progress of U.S. public schools influences public opinion, policy development, and ultimately the life opportunities of our children. It is my hope that these pages will assist journalists and others to better understand the racial dynamics of education policy, so that we may begin to hear the complete story of public schooling in the United States.



Tammy Johnson
Race and Public Policy Program Director
Applied Research Center

RACE REVEALED

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RACE REVEALED

IN HIS RADIO ADDRESS to the nation on January 19, 2002, President Bush declared "Americans can proudly say that we have overcome the institutionalized bigotry that Dr. King fought. Now our challenge is to make sure that every child has a fair chance to succeed in life. That is why education is the greatest civil rights issue of our time."

Education may be the greatest civil rights issue of our time. But we are far from the elimination of institutional bigotry. Students of color often have a very different educational experience than their white counterparts. They are more likely to be taught by an underqualified teacher, to be tracked into remedial rather than college preparatory classes, and to attend overcrowded schools. Institutions of government, from local schools to federal agencies, should first and foremost be concerned with closing the opportunity gaps that exist between white students and students of color.

As various provisions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) are implemented, it is important to recognize how racial dynamics are documented and addressed or remain nameless and ignored. For instance, while NCLB mandates states to disaggregate some data by race—such as test scores—they are not required to do so for such key educational indicators as dropout rates or teacher demographics. Through brief issue summaries and sample articles, the following section illustrates how disclosing the racial dimensions of education issues provides important information to the public and is essential to exposing inequities that afflict U.S. public schools.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

SINCE its passage in 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has brought tremendous benefits to many students. Unfortunately, these benefits have not been equitably distributed. Children of color, particularly Black children, all too often experience inadequate services, low-quality curriculum and instruction, and unnecessary isolation from their non-disabled peers.

In 1998, approximately 1.5 million children of color were identified as having mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or a specific learning disability. However, the process of identifying, evaluating, and placing children in these categories is rife with subjectivity and often yields grossly disparate outcomes. Nationally, Black children are almost three times more likely than whites to be labeled mentally retarded and almost twice as likely to be labeled emotionally disturbed. In addition, in wealthier and "whiter" districts and in many Southern states, Black children, especially males, experience an extraordinarily high risk of being labeled mentally retarded.

The process of identifying, evaluating, and placing children in these categories is rife with subjectivity and often yields grossly disparate outcomes.

Administrators and others often offer poverty as the explanation for these racial disparities. While poverty is certainly likely to contribute, the poverty theory fails to explain (1) why extreme racial disparities are found only in the most subjective and stigmatizing categories like mental retardation and not in medically diagnosed disability categories; (2) why Latinos have a far lower identification rate for mental retardation and emotional disturbance than both whites and Blacks, despite the fact that Latinos share a far greater risk than whites for poverty, exposure to environmental toxins, and low academic achievement; or (3) why the gender differences are more pronounced among Black children than among other racial and ethnic groups. Asian Americans, like Latinos, are also generally under-identified compared to whites.

The research suggests that the observed racial disparities are the result of many interacting factors including unconscious racial bias of educators, large resource inequalities that run along lines of race and class, unjustifiable reliance on IQ and other tests, educators' inappropriate responses to the pressures of high-

POTENTIAL FOUND: THE STORY OF BILLY HAWKINS

THE MISIDENTIFICATION of Black children as having mental retardation or emotional disturbances is widely documented. Each year the talent and potential of thousands of students go untapped. Billy Hawkins was one of the lucky ones.

For the first fifteen years of his life his teachers labeled Billy Hawkins as "educable mentally retarded." Billy was backup quarterback for his high school football team. One night he was called off the bench and rallied his team from far behind. In doing so, he ran complicated plays and clearly demonstrated a gift for the game. The school principal, who was in the stands, recognized that the "retarded boy" could play, signaling that he was most likely misdiagnosed. Soon after the principal had Billy enrolled in regular classes and instructed his teachers to give him extra help. Billy Hawkins went on to complete a Ph.D. and is now Associate Dean at Michigan's Ferris State University.[2]

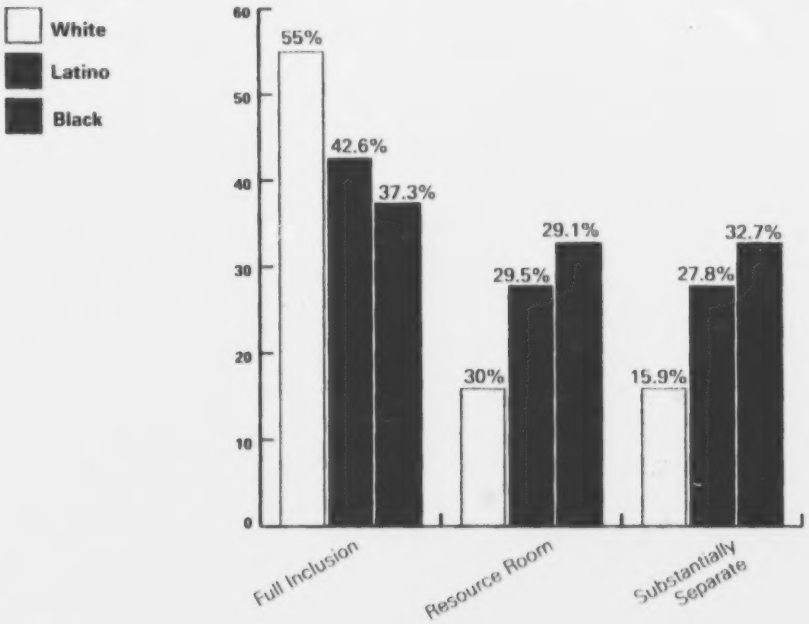
stakes testing, and power differentials between parents of students of color and school officials.[1]

Racial disparities are evident once again in the services that students with disabilities receive. For example, Black children with emotional disturbance often do not receive high-quality early intervention and receive far fewer hours of counseling and related services than white students with emotional disturbance.

Black children with emotional disturbance often do not receive high-quality early intervention and receive far fewer hours of counseling and related services than white students.

In addition, despite the well-established benefits of inclusion, Latino and Black children with disabilities are far less likely than whites to be educated in a fully inclusive general education classroom and are almost twice as likely as whites to be educated in a substantially separate setting (one in which they spend 60 to 100 percent of each school day entirely separate from their non-disabled peers). Thus, for inappropriately identified or segregated students of color, the special education system can be a trap rather than an opportunity to succeed.

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION INCLUSION



Full Inclusion means students spend less than 21% of the day outside a regular education classroom. Resource Room means students spend between 21 and 60% of the day outside a regular education classroom. Substantially Separate means students spend more than 60% of their day outside a regular education classroom.

Source: See Fierros, E. & Conroy, J. (2002). *Double Jeopardy: An Exploration of Restrictiveness and Race in Special Education.* In Losen, D.J. & Orfield, G. (Eds.), *Racial Inequity in Special Education* (p.45). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

REPORTER QUESTIONS ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

1. Are some racial or ethnic groups more likely to be separated from non-disabled peers for special education services compared to whites?
2. How are these concerns monitored at the state and local level? Does every school and district collect data and report to the public?
3. How does inequitable access to high quality teachers and other school resources contribute to this problem?
4. What is the racial makeup of youth in the area's juvenile justice system? How many of these students were assigned to special education programs in schools before their incarceration?

DROPOUT AND GRADUATION RATES

MANY of our nation's schools would have unbearable space, resource, and teacher shortages if most of the students who entered as eighth or ninth graders actually made it to twelfth grade. Extremely low rates of graduation especially plague urban school districts. For example, one recent study from Achieve Inc. and The Civil Rights Project at Harvard shows that in half of the schools located in the nation's 35 largest urban districts, 50 percent or more of the entering ninth grade students do not graduate with a diploma four years later (as illustrated in the graph on the following page). Another 100 urban schools in the districts studied were close to the 50 percent mark. Conservative estimates indicate that at least 25 to 30 percent of students in these schools drop out.

The failure of urban schools to maintain the enrollment of Latinos and African Americans in school is particularly striking. For example, large schools with 90 percent or more children of color accounted for two-thirds of the poorest performing schools, where half or more of the entering ninth grade class failed to graduate on time. Of students nationwide, Latino youth have the highest officially recorded dropout rate at 29.5 percent, and the true rate is probably much higher. The trend in the data depicts urban districts' failure to graduate students of color at increasing rates since the early 1990s.

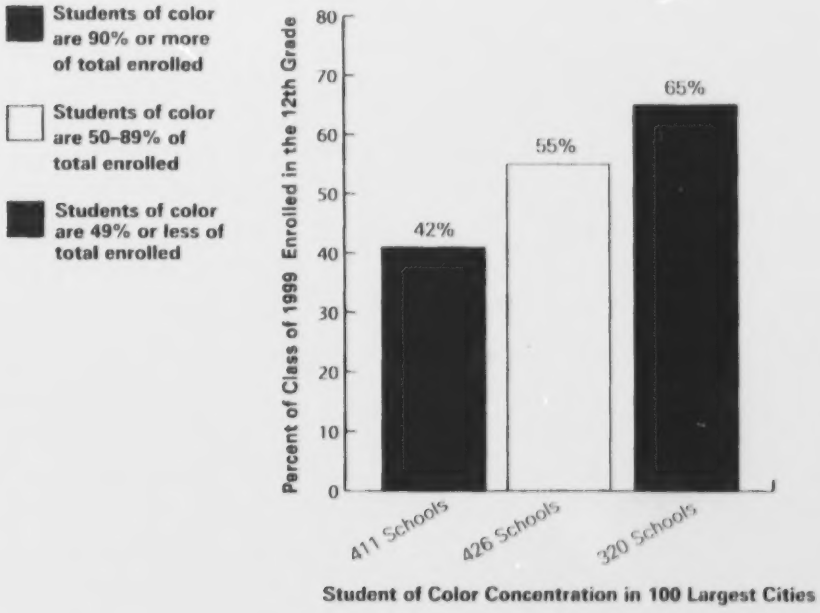
> In half of the schools located in the nation's 35 largest urban districts, 50 percent or more of the entering ninth grade students do not graduate with a diploma four years later.

Dropout rates may not look so grave in official reports because most states and school districts seriously underestimate them. The latest research firmly establishes that the percentage of economically disadvantaged children who drop out between grades nine and 12 far exceeds the rate contained in most official reports. Another serious problem is that the officially reported data are rarely disaggregated by race at the district level.

Many reports also portray failing to graduate as a student's individual decision to drop out, which ignores the impact of school policy. Poor youth and students of color often hit a tremendous wall as they enter large and impersonal high schools. They face acute problems with inexperienced out-of-field teachers and poorly equipped learning environments. Increasingly, urban schools are adopting policies that raise the stakes for students, such as test-driven retention and

WHERE DID ALL THE FRESHMEN GO?

Number of seniors per 100 freshmen by high school student of color concentration.



Source: Balfanz, R. and Legters, N. (2001). *How many Central City High Schools Have a Severe Dropout Problem, Where are they located and Who Attends Them? Initial Estimates Using the Common Core of Data.* Baltimore Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University.

diploma denial, and zero-tolerance discipline. Such policies require relatively little extra effort or resources and tend to push students out rather than keep students in school. Conversely, little attention or resources are devoted to more effective reform efforts, such as smaller schools and smaller classes, that are shown to increase the proportion of diplomas earned and reduce dropout rates, especially among the poor and students of color.

Some hope may be found in the new federal law, which requires schools, districts, and states to improve graduation rates for all students and to report this graduation rate data to the public. Most important, it defines the graduation rate as "the percentage of students who graduate secondary school with a regular diploma in the standard number of years." If states and districts count correctly, dropouts who have so often been left out of the official tallies should show up as students who have not graduated. But states must do more than comply with the letter of the law. They must accurately report graduation rates and then take meaningful action to keep non-graduated youth in school. Without concerted action, outcomes for poor students and students of color will remain bleak.

REPORTER QUESTIONS ON DROPOUT & GRADUATION RATES

1. What percentage of the cohort of entering high school students graduate twelfth grade with a bona fide diploma? What are the percentages for each major racial and ethnic group?

2. Does the school or district report the graduation rates based on the percent of students who graduate in the standard number of years (as required by federal law), or is some other definition being used? How do the graduation rates of various racial and ethnic groups differ when other non-federally mandated methods are used?

3. To what extent has the decline in enrollment from dropouts contributed to test score gains or losses for the eighth or ninth grade cohort? For major racial and ethnic groups within the cohort?

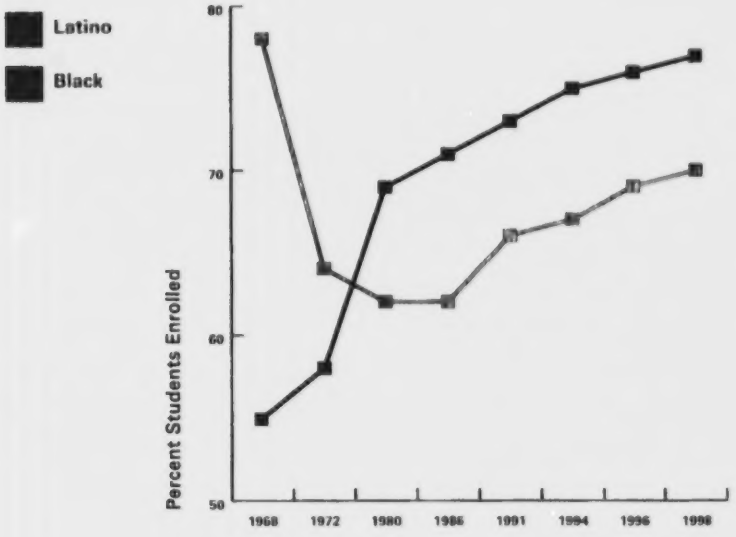
SEGREGATION

THE Supreme Court ruled unanimously in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954) that government-imposed school segregation is illegal, but today many schools are still highly segregated by race and ethnicity. As a consequence, these segregated schools severely lack resources as intended by the court's remedy. Federal courts, following a series of Supreme Court decisions in the 1990s, are increasingly ending local desegregation plans by declaring previously segregated school districts "unitary." This declaration means that the court found these school districts have eliminated the remaining effects of the prior illegal segregation as far as they were able. Research has found that once school districts have been declared unitary, they tend to become more segregated.[3] As a result, school districts such as Charlotte, North Carolina; DeKalb County, Georgia; and Austin, Texas, are no longer able to use the race-conscious tools that they used under a desegregation order to create and maintain racially diverse and integrated schools. Concurrently, legal challenges to voluntary K–12 desegregation efforts in school admissions and assignment, often called "reverse discrimination" cases, continue to be launched, sometimes successfully.

> The familiar Black/white definitions of school segregation may no longer apply, as Latino and Asian American enrollment in public schools has shown particular growth.

Meanwhile, the racial and ethnic diversity of public school students in the United States is increasing. In a number of states, including Texas and California, students of color constitute over 50 percent of all public school students. The familiar Black/white definitions of school segregation may no longer apply, as Latino and Asian American enrollment in public schools has shown particular growth. Latino segregation has steadily increased since 1960, a sign that the problems of segregation will likely spread. Racially segregated schools are overwhelmingly separated by socioeconomic status and by language proficiency as well. Students in these schools are not exposed to high-quality curricula, highly qualified teachers, or important social networks as often as students in wealthier, predominantly white schools. Where there is segregation, regardless of whether it is within or among schools or districts, numerous studies have found that racial disparities in achievement, school resources, discipline, and services between whites and students of color abound. The cumulative negative effects of these demographic factors, legal trends, and disparities have made segregation and gaining access to quality education for students of color a problem that is as relevant today as it was in 1954.

PERCENTAGE OF BLACK AND LATINO STUDENTS IN PREDOMINANTLY BLACK AND LATINO SCHOOLS



Note: Predominantly Black and Latino schools are those schools with 50–100% enrollment of Black and Latino.
Source: U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights data in Orfield, Public School Segregation in the United States, 1968-1980, Tables 1 and 10; Common Core of Data 1991–92, 1996–97 and 1998–2000 from the National Center for Educational Statistics.

Despite the severity of the problem, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) ostensibly ignores the issue of racial segregation. Indirectly, the transfer provisions in NCLB have the potential to affect segregation—depending on who takes advantage of the provisions and what choices the school districts provide. These provisions require school districts to allow children from "failing" schools to transfer to another school in the district that is not "failing." Because the populations of many of the identified "failing" schools are predominantly children of color, a large number of these children may have the opportunity to transfer.

The transfer provisions in No Child Left Behind have the potential to affect segregation

In many cases, they should have the opportunity to transfer to less segregated and better schools. However, research suggests that white students and students from wealthier families will take advantage of the transfer programs more readily than students of color and poorer peers—possibly exacerbating the economic and racial segregation in the schools out of which they transfer.[4] NCLB requires that transfer priority be given first to low-income students, which may

offset this occurrence. Also, school districts may be able to limit choices of schools to which a student can transfer. In some cases, the only available school(s) to which a student can transfer may also be racially segregated. Furthermore, schools that are "full" must still accept transfers, raising the likelihood that these schools will not be able to serve transfer students effectively. In effect, NCLB fails to confront the persistent problem of segregated schools and the access to resources that *Brown v. Board of Education* attempted to address.

REPORTER QUESTIONS ON SEGREGATION

1. Is the school district operating under a court decree to desegregate or a voluntary plan to increase diversity? How are the provisions of the court decree or the voluntary plan being taken into account in the school district's implementation of the transfer provisions in NCLB?

2. What impact do the transfer options have on school districts that predominantly serve students of color and low-income students? In a school district, what percent of those taking advantage of transfer provisions implemented under NCLB are children of color? What outreach has the school district conducted to inform communities of color about the transfer provisions, and when was this outreach performed?

3. What is the racial composition of the "failing" school(s) and what is the racial composition of the school(s) to which students can transfer under NCLB?

SAMPLE NEWS STORY

Test Scores Rise for State's Poor Students [5]

SACRAMENTO, CA—Recently released data from the California Department of Education indicate that not only are a majority of California's public schools doing better than last year, but poor students in particular are achieving at higher levels.

"The API provides a tool for establishing academic growth targets for schools throughout the state and for monitoring each school's performance annually," said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin.

"This year's results again underscore the steady progress of our schools in improving academic performance."

The California Department of Education released the list of schools that reached their Academic Performance Index (API) growth targets on Thursday. Seventy percent of the 6,400 public schools for which data was released improved their API ranking, while 53 percent reached their growth targets from 2001.

The API is a numeric scale that ranges from 200 to 1,000. The scores of individual students on two standardized tests—the Stanford 9 (SAT-9) and the California Standards Test in English Language Arts (CST ELA)—are weighted and combined to generate each school's API score.

In San Jose's East Side Union High School District, Hill High School and Piedmont Hills High School both met their API growth targets from last year and are eligible for the Governor's Performance Awards Program.

Although roughly equal in size, the two high schools are quite different from each other demographically. At Hill High 49 percent of students participate in the free or reduced-price lunch program. Only 17 percent of Hill High parents are college graduates.

In contrast, Piedmont Hills High students tend to come from wealthier and better-educated families. Only 7 percent of Piedmont Hills High students participate in the free or reduced-price lunch program and 40 percent of their parents are college graduates.

Still, both schools made significant gains in their APIs since last year, particularly with regard to the scores of socioeconomically disadvantaged students. For instance, poor students at Hill High increased their API from 531 to 560 between 2001 and 2002. A similar jump occurred at Piedmont Hills, although its base API for socioeconomically disadvantaged students was 81 points higher.

Education officials attribute the improvement to a renewed commitment to raising the bar for all students.

"We don't accept any excuses," said Hill High Principal John Smith. "My teachers understand that even though they're teaching disadvantaged students, they're still accountable for their success."

Teachers couldn't agree more.

"I know that if one of my students is having a hard time with these tests, it's on me to make sure that she or he improves," said English Language Arts teacher Betty Rogers. "Parents also know this and support the work I do in the classroom at home with their kids. For example, if Mary is having a hard time with vocabulary, I might send some extra worksheets home for her to memorize with her mom. We really couldn't do this without caring and committed parents." ∎

RACE REVEALED

SAMPLE NEWS STORY

Standardized Test Scores Rise, but Conditions Unchanged for Black and Latino Students [6]

SACRAMENTO, CA—While state education officials are trumpeting rising test scores, some question if scores tell the whole story. According to the California Department of Education, 70 percent of the 6,400 public schools for which data was released improved their Academic Performance Index (API) ranking, while 53 percent reached their growth targets from 2001.

In San Jose's East Side Union High School District, Hill High and Piedmont Hills High both met their API growth targets from last year and are eligible for the Governor's Performance Awards Program.

District administrators attribute the improvement to an increased focus on testing, but students, parents and teachers say that overemphasizing test preparation has its costs.

Although test scores improved for Latino students at both high schools, for example, Latino students are overrepresented in dropout rates and underrepresented in graduation rates at the district level. Latinos make up 40 percent of students in the district, but represent 61 percent of dropouts and only 32 percent of high school graduates. White students, on the other hand, comprise 17 percent of the student body, 9 percent of dropouts and 19 percent of high school graduates.

"Should our school be rewarded even though students of color still fall through the cracks of the system?" asked Hill High senior and Californians for Justice (CFJ) student leader Antonio Reyes. "I guess it's easier for them to drill facts in our heads so that we can pass a test, rather than dealing with teacher shortages and overcrowded classrooms."

Some educators also caution that improved test scores do not necessarily mean that students are achieving at higher levels. Piedmont Hills teacher Cathy Smith said that test scores could have also risen because so many low-scoring students dropped out and were not tested.

"Kids know that there are tangible consequences tied to these test scores," said Smith. "And I have personally witnessed a number of struggling students drop out because of their frustrations with the test. When are we going to go beyond the scores and begin focusing on what students really need?"

The situation is different, but equally bleak, for African American students in the East Side district.

Susan Brooks, mother of an African American junior at Piedmont Hills High, said that her child isn't being adequately prepared for college.

"When my son Eric started looking into applying to UC Berkeley, he realized that he was not on track to meet the A–G requirements necessary for college eligibility," said Brooks. "The semester was half over by the time he could get an appointment to meet with his academic counselor."

In 2001, of the 22 African American Piedmont Hills graduates, only six, or roughly 27 percent, had completed the UC and California State University (CSU) requirements. That same year approximately 45 percent of white Piedmont Hills graduates were college eligible.

Still, some educators stand by test scores as a meaningful accountability measure.

"My teachers understand that even though they're teaching disadvantaged students, they're still accountable for their success," said Hill High principal John Smith. "Test scores are an effective way to gauge student achievement."

But Californians for Justice organizer Katie Wise says that test scores are just a smoke screen.

"What we're really dealing with here on the East Side is a matter of priorities," said Wise. "It's ridiculous to spend so much time, money and energy on testing, when the district only has 48 counselors for almost 24,000 students. It's no wonder counselors are overwhelmed."

A recently passed ballot measure may provide needed relief. Measure J, which was approved by 59 percent of voters, raises $5 million over six years to hire more counselors, provide incentives for teachers to get their credentials and increase student safety.

"It's definitely a step in the right direction," said Wise. ▮

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RACE AND NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

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NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB) AND ACCOUNTABILITY

NCLB requires states to intervene in underperforming schools with a series of escalating responses, including: (1) technical assistance to develop school plans; (2) providing the option to transfer to better performing schools; (3) offering supplemental services such as tutoring to low-income students; and (4) a variety of governance restructuring options including turning a school over to private management, creating a public charter, or state takeover. Meanwhile, as the law is commonly understood and as it is being implemented, states' responsibility to provide the essential elements of a quality education has received considerably less attention.

WILL NCLB INTERVENTIONS INCREASE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR?

Consequences for underperforming schools are commonly viewed as punitive—grounded in a belief that applying more political pressure on low-income schools and districts, ones with weak structures and supports, will result in meaningful educational improvement. For children of color, who are more likely to attend under-resourced and underperforming schools, these consequences can exacerbate existing racial inequities.

DOES THE LAW PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES IN EDUCATION OUTCOMES?

It is possible within the law to shift some attention to existing inequities and to think about adequate yearly progress and school identification very differently. States can hold on to a rigorous and consistent definition of "adequate yearly progress" for all students and subgroups, while changing the meaning and consequences of finding a lack of progress. A system of responses tailored more explicitly to the nature and extent of the problem, while relying more on encouraging continuous improvement and less on stigma and fear of sanctions, could improve student performance and insure that no students languish in ineffective programs.

HARRY CUTTING

ACCOUNTABILITY [7]

THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT (NCLB) has brought new attention to the academic achievement of children of color and low-income students. NCLB is grounded in the following premises: (1) all children can learn at a high level; (2) the achievement gap between children of color and white children (as well as between rich and poor) is not acceptable; and (3) the educational system must be held accountable for closing this gap and providing all children with the education they need to achieve at high levels. The law holds states accountable by mandating that they provide students with the elements of a quality education and intervene in schools where students do not meet state achievement goals.

As the law is commonly understood, and as it is being implemented, only the second component of this accountability system—intervention in underperforming schools—is receiving any attention. States have begun to impose new federally mandated consequences on schools that fail to demonstrate student progress without insuring that all schools have the wherewithal to provide the essential elements of a quality education. Thus, the impact of the law on educational opportunities for students of color will depend largely on the criteria for and the outcomes of these interventions.

The Nuts and Bolts of Accountability: NCLB amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the largest federal education program. In 2003, Title I granted $11.7 billion in federal funds to schools that serve low-income children, reaching a total of 12 million children, 64 percent of whom are students of color, in about 48,000 schools.[8] It also sets out a basic

framework meant to insure that students achieve state standards for what all children should learn. Title I requires each state to develop:

- Challenging standards for what all students should know and be able to do; [9]
- A system of assessing whether every student has reached "proficiency" in those standards; [10]
- Report cards and other public reporting of school data and assessment results, disaggregated by race, economic disadvantage, disability, migrant status, and English proficiency;
- A system of interventions when student achievement is deemed inadequate, a provision of NCLB.

Interventions begin when individual schools, school districts, or the state as a whole fail to make "adequate yearly progress" (AYP), which is the degree of improvement required to enable all students in each school's key subgroups—each racial and ethnic group, low-income students, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency, as well as the entire student body—to reach a proficient or advanced level by the year 2014-2015.[11] Three stages of regulations apply to schools that fail to make AYP. A school where students as a whole or any of the subgroups fail to make AYP for two years in a

> Interventions into underperforming schools are grounded in a belief that simply applying more political pressure on low-income schools and districts will result in meaningful improvements.

row will be considered "in improvement" and must develop and implement a school improvement plan, with the involvement of parents and technical assistance from the district and/or state. The district must also allow students to transfer to other public schools that are making adequate yearly progress and must provide transportation to those schools. If, after one year of being "in improvement," the school is still not making sufficient progress, parents of low-income students remaining in the school must also be offered the option to obtain additional services—such as tutoring—from public or private providers.

Schools that fail to meet their targets after two years "in improvement" are subject to "corrective action," which includes a revised improvement plan, continued technical assistance, and continued parental options for transfer and supplemental services. Corrective action also requires at least one of the following interventions:

- Replacement of school staff
- Full implementation of a new curriculum, with appropriate professional development
- Significant decrease in the school's management authority
- Appointment of an outside expert to advise the school on its progress
- Extension of the school year or school day
- A restructured internal organization

Finally, schools that are still behind after one full year of "corrective action" are subject to "restructuring." In this stage, the district must reopen the school as a public charter school, replace all or most of the school staff (which may include the principal), contract with a private management company to operate the school, turn the school's operation over to the state, or engage in any other fundamental restructuring of governance. Districts as a whole are subject to parallel accountability and intervention provisions.

Consequences for Children of Color: These interventions into underperforming schools are commonly viewed as punitive—grounded in a belief that simply applying more political pressure on low-income schools and districts, ones with weak structures and supports, will result in meaningful improvements. Not surprisingly, these interventions have serious implications for under-resourced schools where students of color are concentrated. Understanding these implications will require a closer look at each of the interventions.

School Improvement Plans

Schools that are "in improvement" or in the "corrective action" stage must develop school improvement plans. Developing improvement plans should provide an opportunity to address specific problem areas and to engage parents more intensely with the school. Increased parent involvement has been shown to directly increase student achievement for all students,[12] and especially for African American children.[13] However, school plans have often been seen as merely a bureaucratic mandate fulfilled by administrators and rarely become a meaningful collaborative process involving students, parents, teachers, and other community members. Too often, parents don't feel welcome in their children's schools, and this perception grows when parents' racial, cultural, linguistic, or class backgrounds differ from school staff.[14] If the development of school improvement plans excludes parents of color, students of color are likely to continue to be left behind.

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Technical Assistance and Resources

It is also important to consider the resources and technical assistance that states provide to schools and districts identified as needing improvement or corrective action. Since the 1994 version of Title I, schools identified as underperforming have often not received meaningful and effective help despite district and state obligations to provide it.[15] In fact, many schools identified as underperforming have not received any help at all. Under NCLB, many more schools will fall into this category. Yet technical assistance, provided by consultants and other education professionals, may be needed to illuminate some of the significant adjustments that schools need to make to meet Title I proficiency standards. Many of these schools will need major changes in instruction, teacher quality, and resources for students. To the extent that technical assistance exposes resource inequities—such as the fact that students of color are 1.7 times more likely than white students to be in overcrowded schools[16]—it remains the responsibility of states to create the educational conditions that will improve student achievement in underperforming and under-resourced schools. Considering that many states are reducing public education spending due to severe budget deficits, the capacity and political will for diminishing public school inequities are in question.

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Transfer Options and Supplemental Services

The options to transfer to a "better" performing school or to receive supplemental services outside of regular school hours are based on the premise that students should not languish in inadequate programs. Significant questions remain, however, about the effectiveness of these options. Students of color and low-income students are often concentrated in overcrowded urban districts, where neighboring schools have little room to accept transfer students. In districts with few other schools that are making adequate progress or schools that present barriers such as restrictive admissions requirements, children with the greatest need may not benefit at all. Meanwhile, access to supplemental services and transfer options will depend upon families getting enough information and assistance to select, negotiate, and monitor those services.[17] For students with limited English proficiency and students with

disabilities, this requires additional resources and attention. Department of Education guidelines have significant potential for civil rights violations—both by allowing religiously affiliated service providers to exclude some students and by indicating that districts and states may provide some students with a constricted range of transfer and supplemental service choices.

The focus on helping students transfer may also have an impact on the resources of a school and school district. Schools that lose students to the transfer option will typically no longer receive the state and local money attached to those students' enrollment. Meanwhile, districts must use Title I money to pay for the transportation costs of students who choose to transfer, and for supplemental services for students below a certain income threshold. The financial impact will depend on how many students choose these options, but will to a greater or lesser extent diminish resources for the school's core academic program.

Restructuring and For-Profit Management

The third "restructuring" stage includes options for intervention that allow schools to be turned over to private management. Limited experiments with for-profit managers of public schools have mixed results in terms of their ability to improve student performance and to insure adequate resources for a quality education.[18] Questions of discrimination also arise. For example, Edison Schools, Inc., the nation's largest for-profit manager of public schools, has been accused of purposefully excluding students of color.[19] The U.S. Department of Education's interpretation of NCLB also opens the doors for privatization of mandatory supplemental services, without guaranteeing that these providers are accountable to the same civil rights laws that

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govern public schools. In particular, under the Department's interpretation, religiously affiliated providers would be exempt from civil rights obligations. Meanwhile, it is possible that voucher advocates will make the failure of NCLB to improve public education highly visible, further shifting the focus from public schools to private options. This shift has potentially grave implications for students of color, who may be denied access to private schools and remain trapped in public schools that have even fewer resources. On the other hand, parents have not rushed to use the transfer option, even to public schools with a documented record of higher achievement, which may

weaken the case for vouchers.[20] All these issues must be watched closely as the law approaches full implementation.

Unanticipated Consequences

Another reality of the NCLB accountability system is that some schools, districts, and states seek out short-term but counterproductive escape hatches—such as lowering the definition of "proficient," not counting certain children in determining school performance, or substituting test preparation for deeper mastery of the standards.[21] "Teaching to the test" is a particular hazard in under-resourced schools, where more students are in jeopardy of failure. Meanwhile, students of color may be more vulnerable to being "pushed out" through grade retention, tracking into alternative programs, or discipline policies, all of which have negative consequences for educational attainment and life outcomes. When schools, districts, and states respond with such short-term strategies, the quality of education for many students of color and low-income students suffers.

Rethinking Progress and Accountability: The common understanding of these consequences—and thus the way they are likely to be implemented—are punitive and stigmatizing, and have the potential to exacerbate existing racial inequities in public schools. But it is also possible within the law to shift some attention to preexisting inequities and to think about adequate yearly progress and school identification very differently. States can hold on to a rigorous and consistent definition of "adequate yearly progress" for all students and subgroups, while changing the meaning and consequences of finding a lack of progress. A system of responses tailored more explicitly to the nature and extent of the problem, while relying more on encouraging continuous improvement and less on stigma and fear of sanctions, could improve student performance and insure that NCLB attains its stated goals.

> The problem is not with the Act's focus on student progress but rather with how the system responds when gaps in such progress are identified.

Such a system of accountability would monitor students on their path toward mastery of challenging standards. When students are not on such a path, effective intervention is necessary. This is true regardless of whether the lack of progress is found in a single student, a single subject area, a population subgroup, or an entire school. From this vantage point, the problem is not with the Act's focus on student progress but rather with how the system responds when gaps in such progress are identified. Rather than labeling some schools "good"

and some "bad," the system must acknowledge that in varying degrees virtually every school needs to do some things differently if all its students are to become able to meet higher standards. Schools must work to become successful learning communities that take responsibility for themselves and the achievement of their students, identify weaknesses, respond with well-designed improvements, and then provide further supports if those interventions are not successful.

The ability of schools to reach this standard depends first on having the skills, resources, and dedication to provide the essential elements of a quality education. Some key provisions of pre-NCLB regulations address the baseline of what schools need to provide so that all students can achieve at high levels. These mandates can be the basis for effectively challenging the punitive aspects of NCLB. Since 1994, Title I has required schools to provide students with

- An accelerated, enriched curriculum aligned with the standards.
- Effective instruction from highly qualified teachers, who are receiving intensive, ongoing, high-quality staff development.
- Timely, effective assistance whenever an individual student is experiencing difficulty mastering any of the standards.

Parent and community involvement should play a central role in guaranteeing that these provisions are being met. Since 1994, the law has required schools to work with parents to develop an educational program,[22] mandating that

- The school's educational plan—spelling out *how* it will provide the required elements of a quality and effective curriculum, instruction, staffing, staff development, and individual assistance—must be developed *jointly* with the parents of the school and be based on a comprehensive needs assessment. This assessment should provide an opportunity for parents, teachers, and administrators to identify critical resource inequities that challenge many overcrowded and underperforming schools where students of color are concentrated.
- A parent involvement policy that is *jointly developed with* and *agreed upon* by the parents of the school must spell out how parents will be involved in developing the program plan for providing these quality elements. This agreed-upon policy must also detail how parents will receive accessible information, training, and other assistance needed to understand the law, monitor their children's performance, and participate effectively.

The state shares responsibility for insuring local compliance with these Title I provisions on program quality and parent involvement. Moreover, Title I law requires the state's plan to spell out *how* it will help each district and school develop the capacity to comply with these quality provisions—enriched curriculum, qualified teachers and teacher training, and individualized assistance.[23] Yet despite these requirements of the law, and the primary role of states in funding and administering public education, the political will to provide the necessary resources for schools to put these elements into effect is still missing.

As any frustrated parent, good school administrator, or education advocate knows, meaningful parental involvement doesn't happen with the wave of a magic wand. Successful engagement of parents often requires separate, dedicated staff supported by adequate resources, skills, and knowledge of the community. To be successful, this process must overcome barriers of culture, language, and discrimination that often alienate parents of color from the school community. Supporters of NCLB often assume that data provided to parents and the public through report cards and other means will itself stimulate schools to improve and empower parents and the public to push for improvement.

> NCLB provisions should be matched with the obligations that states, districts, and schools have under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to identify sources of racial disparities.

But achievement data is insufficient without the ability to analyze the quality of the school's educational inputs (curriculum, teacher quality, facilities and materials, intervention services, etc.) and understand how they could be improved. While the school improvement plan required of schools that are "in improvement" is supposed to be based on a needs assessment, it's likely that this assessment may incorporate little beyond test results. Youth, parents, and communities will be better equipped to effectively organize and hold schools, districts, and states accountable to Title I provisions if they have access to other information, such as data from the U.S. Office for Civil Rights Elementary and Secondary school survey forms. These surveys provide information on indicators such as special education, ability grouping, magnet schools or programs, and data on corporal punishment, suspension, high school diplomas, and certificates of attendance or completion. Similarly, the NCLB provisions should be matched with the obligations that states, districts, and schools have under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to identify sources of racial disparities in educational achievements and to take effective steps to eliminate those disparities.

The full implementation of the Title I school-level provisions on program quality and parental involvement would go a long way towards guaranteeing a high-quality education for students of color and low-income students. Yet, few parents know about these provisions, which also remain poorly understood by many schools. To help leverage Title I provisions, three important needs related to inequities in power and resources must be addressed:

- State, federal, and district agencies must provide parents and students with adequate information, training, governance information, and advocacy assistance.
- A system of independent monitoring and enforcement of the process and implementation requirements should be in place.
- Schools and parents must articulate and demand the resources necessary for implementing the essential elements of a quality education.

Conclusion: NCLB could fall short of its intended purpose or even make some matters worse in a number of very troubling ways, some of which are already realities. When a law is passed with the stated intent of benefiting underprivileged groups, the same political or economic inequalities that disadvantage them in the first place typically make them least able to influence the way the law is implemented to insure that it benefits them. While the law is far from perfect, the path to averting or combating most of these negative possibilities is found in the words of the law itself. If the nation's leaders are serious about leaving no child behind, then they must redirect the focus of accountability to one that proactively addresses the systemic issues of racial disparities and resource inequities that plague the nation's public schools.

REPORTER QUESTIONS ON ACCOUNTABILITY

1. During any stage of action (improvement, corrective, or restructuring), what is being done to address capacity limitations or resource inequities that a school or district may face?
2. Do schools create and implement clear and effective plans, as required by Title I, for how they will provide the high-quality curriculum, instruction, and individual assistance students need to attain proficiency on high standards? What are states doing to assist and monitor schools' efforts to meet those obligations?
3. Are low-income parents and parents of color empowered and engaged in these planning processes at the level required in the law—as real, informed partners in jointly developing the programs for providing high-quality education?

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB) AND TESTS:

NCLB requires annual reading and math assessments in grades three through eight, and at least once in grades 10 to 12, by the 2005-2006 school year, with science added by the 2007-2008 school year. Failure to reach proficiency on these exams triggers a series of escalating consequences for schools. The law allows for the use of alternative assessments such as school quality reviews and performance and portfolio evaluations. However, budget constraints may drive states to measure the success of schools primarily based on standardized exams.

WHO IS TESTING THE TESTS?

In 2002, the Office for Civil Rights stated that using a single test score to make significant educational decisions for students "can undermine the quality of education and equality of opportunity."[24] Numerous studies confirm that a heavy reliance on standardized tests degrades the curriculum and marginalizes multicultural and bilingual education. Students of color are particularly likely to see their education suffer as a result of test preparation, as teachers with a high percentage of students of color are significantly more likely to state that standardized tests affect their teaching style.[25]

HOW CAN TESTS AND TEST SCORES BE USED APPROPRIATELY?

NCLB requires assessment results to be disaggregated by race. However, such assessments ignore more reliable indicators of educational opportunity and outcomes such as class size and expenditures, teacher quality and diversity, and dropout and college entrance rates. For NCLB to achieve its desired results, assessment tools must not be used to make high-stakes decisions for underperforming schools, but rather to expose inequities so they may be eliminated, and improve instruction so that every student may achieve her or his full potential.

DAVID BACON

TESTING

THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT was signed into law on January 8, 2002, with the promise of improving the academic achievement of all children and shrinking the gap between children of color and white children. Despite this laudatory goal, NCLB has been met with concern by administrators, educators, parents, and students, with particularly sharp criticism originating in communities of color. Much of this reaction can be attributed to the use of standardized tests as the sole measure of student achievement and the Act's implications for both equity and educational opportunity.

Standardized tests are not new to public schools. What is new, however, is the weight and the frequency of these exams: NCLB requires annual reading and math assessments in grades three to eight, and at least once in grades 10 to 12, by the 2005-2006 school year, with science added by 2007-2008. Prior to NCLB, only seven states tested students this often. Failure to reach proficiency on these exams triggers a series of escalating consequences for schools.[26] Yet contrary to this reliance on test scores to hold schools accountable, a growing body of research demonstrates that standardized exams alone are neither sufficient for measuring student performance nor valid for making determinations about school policy and governance. Questions about standardized tests regard the validity of exams in terms of accuracy and content; fairness, in terms of being free of bias and the opportunities for students to learn the tested material; and their utility in improving student achievement. Each of these concerns has particular implications for children of color.

Validity: NCLB mandates that tests are "valid and reliable for the purposes for which the assessment system is used." In other words, tests must effectively inform the decisions that are made based on their results. Three key questions that determine validity include

- Whether a test **accurately measures** student performance;
- Whether the **content** of a test reflects what students should be learning;
- The extent to which test results are **manipulated** in high-stakes environments.

Researchers, educators, and test writers themselves all question the notion that a single standardized exam can be an accurate measure of student performance. According to the definitive guide for judging test validity, Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests, no "decision or characterization" of students that has a major impact on their future should be made "on the basis of a single test score."[27] In 2002, the Office for Civil Rights echoed this statement, saying that such inappropriate test use "can undermine the quality of education and equality of opportunity."[28] Factors that contribute to the unreliability of a single test score include test content, length, conditions of the testing environment, random variation, and score manipulation, among others.[29] Some states have experimented with more comprehensive forms of assessment, and NCLB asks states to use multiple measures to determine student performance.

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These alternative forms of assessment can be expensive and difficult to implement, and pose challenges for rating schools or districts. As Robert Linn, Co-Director of the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, states, "For states that do not already have in place all the assessments required by NCLB, [standardized] norm-referenced tests...will often be the most efficient and cost-effective way to fill in the missing grade/subject areas."[30] Despite questions of accuracy, the majority of states will rate schools based on performance on a single standardized exam.[31]

One of the consequences of standardized exams is the increased emphasis, in both curriculum and pedagogy, on preparing students for the exams. States establish content and learning standards, and NCLB mandates that tests must be aligned to these standards. This has proven to be a major challenge for many

states. California, for example, spent years developing a test (CLAS) that was aligned to the state's language standards and reflected a multicultural curriculum. However, after then-Governor Pete Wilson charged that the exam served the interests of "multicultural extremists," CLAS was replaced by the commercially available SAT-9 exam that is not aligned to any state standards.[11] Meanwhile, even when tests are aligned to state standards, educators disagree about the quality of the standards themselves. In Oregon, for example, state education officials "have tried so hard to go right down the middle between what teachers

> Students of color in under-resourced and underperforming schools are first in line for a culturally truncated curriculum.

want, what parents want, and what the legislature wants," according to Dawn Billings, a Department of Education curriculum coordinator. The results have led many observers to charge that the standards lack critical sensitivity, meaning they ignore conflict, avoid diversity of interpretation, and contradict the ideals of a multicultural curriculum.[33]

Numerous studies confirm that a heavy reliance on standardized tests degrades the curriculum and marginalizes multicultural and bilingual education. Few studies have sought to quantify the outcomes of a multicultural education in terms of test scores, college admissions, or other life outcomes, which is partly due to debates over how to define it. Still, evidence exists that it makes a difference for many students. Psychological studies have demonstrated that for some, multicultural education makes school more "relevant," contributing to decreased dropout rates. Others have reported a decrease in racial stereotyping in the school and an increase sense of belonging and self-confidence, particularly for students of color.[34] Yet ironically, these students of color, concentrated in under-resourced and often underperforming schools that are likely to face intense pressure to improve test scores, are first in line for a culturally truncated curriculum.

The pressure to improve test scores can have severe consequences both for test validity and for educational equity and quality, particularly for students of color. Some means by which states, districts, schools, and teachers manipulate test results include the following:[35]

- **Teaching to the test**. Studies have documented the effects of high-stakes testing on instruction, including spending more classroom time in tested subject areas at the expense of non-tested subjects, or devoting more time specifically to test preparation at the expense of other curricula.[36] "Familiarity with the form of the test, that's good," says W.

James Popham, assessment expert and professor emeritus at the University of California, Los Angeles, "but we find, in some schools, that they are shutting down everything for a month or more" to prepare for the test.[37] Students of color are most likely to see their education suffer as a result of test preparation, as teachers with a high percentage of students of color are significantly more likely to state that standardized tests affect their teaching style.[38]

- **Grade retention for underperforming students and increased dropouts or pushouts**. Research by Walt Haney of Boston College reveals that since Texas instituted high- stakes testing, African American and Latino students have been increasingly forced to repeat grades, such that cumulative rates of retention are almost twice as high for students of color as for white students.[39] This grade retention is correlated to increased probability of students dropping out of school.[40] For example, of 16- through 24-year-olds who repeated one or more grades by 1995, 24 percent had dropped out, compared to only about 10 percent of young adults who were never held back in school.[41]

- **Setting the bar**. States determine what constitutes "proficient" for their schools, and the push to reach 100 percent proficiency may create a race to the bottom in terms of state standards. Already, Colorado, Connecticut, and Louisiana have lowered state standards for "proficient" to decrease the numbers of "failing" schools under NCLB, and other states are likely to follow suit.[42] This lowering of academic standards may affect educational quality for all students.

Any definition of fairness requires an analysis of the opportunity that students have to learn the tested material.

Unfortunately, such methods of inflating scores are not uncommon. Research demonstrates that pressure to manipulate test scores at the expense of real education may be more acute in low-performing schools.[43] As states implement NCLB's testing requirements, it is critical to ask tough questions about the content and the accuracy of standardized exams and investigate the multiple effects of score inflation on educational quality.

Fairness for All Students: In its report, *Making Sense of Test-Based Accountability*, the Rand Corporation defines fairness as one of the technical criteria for evaluating standardized tests. This fairness includes an assessment of whether a test is free of racial or other forms of bias. Perhaps more important,

however, any definition of fairness requires an analysis of the opportunity that students have to learn the tested material. NCLB mandates the reporting of test scores for racial and ethnic subgroups, Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, and students with disabilities, and requires each of these groups to advance toward proficiency. However, while holding all students to high standards may help insure that schools do not neglect students of color, NCLB is unlikely to lead states to address existing inequities in learning opportunities. Some of these inequities include

- **School funding and segregation**. Two-thirds of students of color still attend schools that are predominantly students of color, mostly located in low-income neighborhoods in central cities and frequently funded at substantially lower levels than neighboring suburban districts. The wealthiest 10 percent of school districts in the U.S. spend 10 times more than the poorest 10 percent, and spending ratios of three-to-one are common within states.[44]

- **Access to challenging curricula**. Studies suggest that tracking and the quality of available academic opportunities affect both the test score gap and the gap in academic performance generally.[45] Students of color are less likely to attend schools with advanced placement classes or other accelerated curricula, and even within schools, research shows that racial bias plays a large part in determining educational tracks for students. In San Jose, California, researchers found that seventh-grade Latino students with high test scores were about half as likely as their white peers to gain entry to accelerated classes, and in 10th grade, whites were more than twice as likely as Latino students with similar test scores to be in accelerated classes. This inequity was at least partly based on stereotypes—when queried about the disparities, teachers said that the conditions they imagined were characteristic of the Latino students' homes were not adequate to help the students meet the challenges of the higher-level classes.[46]

- **Social and institutional expectations.** Low expectations of students of color, both on the part of teachers and as a reflection of the opportunities available to them in schools and society at large, influence the way students perform in school and on exams. Psychological studies have demonstrated a correlation between racial stereotyping and underachievement on standardized exams.[47] Meanwhile, similar stereotypes often cause children of color to be tracked into special education programs, leaving them ill prepared for academic or life achievement. The odds of an African American child being designated as mentally retarded are over four times greater than for a white child in

Connecticut, Mississippi, North Carolina, Nebraska, and South Carolina. Meanwhile, African American children are overrepresented in special education classes in 45 out of 50 states.[48] Such designations may become more prevalent when schools are under pressure to raise test scores.

A truly effective assessment program can help to identify such inequities so that resources can be targeted to eliminate them.[49] Yet evidence from states where high-stakes testing programs are already in place indicates that testing can exacerbate resource disparities. Douglas Staiger and Thomas Kane found that in California and Texas, schools where students of color are concentrated are less likely to receive state-level awards for performance on standardized tests.[50] In 2001, the most diverse schools in California received only $9 per student in performance awards, compared to an average of $21 per student for mostly white schools.[51] When states use test results to determine state expenditures, we must monitor whether this spending addresses or exacerbates resource inequities.

In California and Texas, schools where students of color are concentrated, are less likely to receive state-level awards for performance on standardized tests.

Utility: It is certainly important for a test to be a valid measure of student performance and for students to have a fair opportunity to learn the tested material. But an equally important question about tests is whether the test improves educational quality and opportunity. Consistent with the rhetoric of accountability, reporters, parents, and policymakers must ask in-depth questions about whether tests lead to improvements in school quality, improve individual student instruction, and are worth the costs to other education budget areas.

Some proponents of NCLB contend that requiring test score increases across racial and ethnic subgroups will raise the bar for students of color and thus bring more attention to the quality of education that students of color receive. To date, little empirical evidence supports this contention. A study by Thomas Kane and Douglas Staiger titled Volatility in School Test Scores found no improvements in test scores among students of color in schools where racial subgroup performance was calculated versus schools without such a calculation.[54] There is some question as to whether in its implementation NCLB will lead to meaningful assistance to schools that are identified as low performing due to disparities in scores among racial subgroups. It is possible that states will use test results to target needed resources, such as high-quality teachers and

FAIRNESS FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS

THE National Association for Bilingual Education supports the subgroup classification of LEP students to insure that these students are not ignored. Yet students with limited English proficiency face an even higher risk of remaining in schools that fail to reach proficiency than most students of color. Depending on immigration trends, LEP subgroups may fill with new students each year, and students will flow out of LEP subgroups once they reach English fluency. Thus, regardless of the quality of instruction, the constant influx of new students will make it very unlikely that LEP subgroups will achieve proficiency. As a result, the bill "automatically penalizes schools and districts with a continued influx of immigrant students," says bilingual educator Charlie Bauer of the Phoenix-Talent School District.

Testing requirements also threaten proven educational methods for LEP students. A 1997 report released by Wayne P. Thomas and Virginia P. Collier at George Washington University found that children in bilingual programs develop academic English better and more quickly than children in English-only classrooms. Meanwhile, although most children gain a basic understanding of a language within a year, it takes most children four to seven years to develop academic proficiency.[52] Yet, under NCLB, students who have attended U.S. schools (excluding Puerto Rico) for three years must take assessments in English, with up to two years of exceptions possible on a case-by-case basis. While states must develop accommodations for other languages "to the extent practicable," all reading tests must be taken in English. These tests may pressure schools toward English-only instruction, despite extensive research proving that LEP students learn faster and better in all subjects, including English, if they first or simultaneously learn academic concepts in their native language.[53] Thus, LEP students face a double bind: While the schools they attend are likely to face punitive interventions, the teaching methods that could help them most are also at risk.

teacher training, to schools that are traditionally underserved. However, in the absence of federal funding and in the face of budget deficits, whether states will use the results of federally mandated standardized tests to guide decisions on closing opportunity and achievement gaps is uncertain.

Standardized exams provide little indication as to why students struggle with particular problems or content areas, which compromises the tests' diagnostic capabilities.

While NCLB uses test results as a tool to hold schools accountable for student progress, assessment systems can also provide information to improve individual student instruction by exposing areas that need improvement. In this regard, the utility of standardized exams again comes into question. Standardized exams provide little indication as to why students struggle with particular problems or content areas, which compromises the tests' diagnostic capabilities.[35] Meanwhile, NCLB regulations require that states provide assessment results to school districts, schools, and teachers by the beginning of the next school year. While this may have some value for longer-range planning for teachers and schools, these results will be less useful to teachers who wish to improve individual instruction for their current students.

Testing is less expensive than many proven ways to improve school performance, such as raising teacher quality or reducing classroom sizes. Still, executing the testing requirements of NCLB will be costly for states and may lead to cuts in other programs. NCLB appropriated $387 million in federal dollars for assessment development in 2002. Meanwhile, the National Association of State Boards of Education estimates that properly funding the testing mandate could cost anywhere from $2.7 billion to $7 billion over the next seven years.[36] Much of this money must come out of state budgets. Over the past five years alone, state testing expenditures have almost tripled, from $141 million to $390 million.[36] In Texas, for example, state spending on testing rose from $19.5 million in 1995 to $68.6 million in 2000. This $49.1 million increase was offset by drastic cuts to adult education, which was cut in half between 1995 and 2001 (from $87.3 million to $40.4 million), and to professional development for teachers, which was cut by two-thirds (from $28 million to $9.8 million).

As NCLB seeks to fulfill its promise to eliminate the achievement gap, its biggest test may regard tests themselves. NCLB should be lauded for its emphasis on reporting assessment results disaggregated by race, because such data can provide leverage for those who wish to expose and address many racial dispari-

ties. Such assessments ignore more telling indicators, however, such as graduation and dropout rates, teacher quality and diversity, or class sizes and expenditures. Thus, for most parents of color, these test scores only tell them what they already know: that too often the public education system fails their children. For NCLB to achieve its desired results, assessment tools must not be used primarily to impose high stakes on under-performing schools, but rather to shine a light on the essential components of a quality education, expose inequities so they may be eliminated, and improve instruction so that every student may achieve.

REPORTER QUESTIONS ON TESTING

1. What are low performing schools, where students of color are particularly concentrated, doing to raise test scores? Does an increase in scores correspond to actual knowledge attainment or simply more effective test preparation?
2. Can teachers use test results to improve instruction for individual students? How have test results affected teaching methods, staff development and the assessment of teachers?
3. How has the testing mandate affected LEP students?
4. Are students being retained or dropping out because of pressure to raise test scores?
5. Which state programs are being cut to make room for the NCLB testing mandate, and are the tradeoffs worth the costs?

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB) AND TEACHER QUALITY

By the end of the 2005-06 school year, every teacher working in a public school must be "highly qualified," which is defined by the law as one who: (1) holds a bachelor's degree; (2) either has obtained a full state teacher certification or has passed the state licensing exam and holds a license to teach; and (3) has not had any certification or license requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis. Each state must submit annual reports to the federal Department of Education on their progress towards reaching this goal, and parents must be informed of the qualifications of their child's teachers.

WHAT ROLE DOES RACE PLAY IN NCLB'S TEACHER QUALITY MANDATES?

A dual issue for low-income communities of color is access to the teaching profession and quality teachers for all children. For instance, despite growing linguistic, cultural, and racial diversity in the U.S., people of color only represent about nine percent of the country's public school teachers. Students of color are also more likely than white students to be taught by underqualified teachers. The teacher quality provisions of NCLB, as currently defined, fail to address the lack of diversity of the teaching corps as well as the unequal distribution of qualified teachers.

WHAT ADDITIONAL DATA ARE NEEDED?

NCLB does not require states to report the racial composition of their teaching force or study its implication for quality education. Also, the law is silent on issues such as teacher retention and mobility by race, and the relationship between student achievement and the availability of appropriate role models. Without this data, it will be difficult to examine relevant information pertaining to race and teacher quality.

DAVID BACON

TEACHER QUALITY

Academics, education experts, and advocates alike recognize that one way to effectively address the racial achievement gap in U.S. schools is to provide access to quality teachers. This is especially true for students in schools with the fewest resources. Yet virtually any urban school district that serves large populations of children of color illustrates how inequity is perpetuated though disparities in teacher quality, expectations, and academic achievement. A study at Georgia State University exposes the connection between the reality of race and educational access. Researchers found that nearly one-third of the state's white teachers left the predominately Black schools where they taught. They found no similar trend for Black teachers.

> *In particular, white teachers are much more likely to leave schools that served higher proportions of Black students. Teachers who changed schools moved to schools that served lower proportions of Black students and low-income students, and [to schools with] students that scored higher on achievement exams.*[58]

Researchers also concluded that schools with high turnover rates were more likely to hire inexperienced teachers and have fewer applicants from which to choose for each open job, directly impacting the quality of teaching in the classroom. The issues of white flight and access to the profession for people of color and low-income communities are crucial to the analysis of teacher quality. However, these and other racially based factors are rarely part of the public discussion regarding the "teacher quality" mandates of No Child Left Behind. If

we are to truly address the systemic racial inequalities that are embedded in the nation's schools, public discussion must include these factors.

The Law and Teacher Quality: No Child Left Behind (NCLB) explicitly states concern for improving the educational achievement of children and youth disadvantaged by an inequitable educational system. It speaks to reducing the achievement gap based on race, ethnicity, poverty, disability, and limited English proficiency. One approach to alleviating this gap is through improving the quality of the teaching force for everyone, particularly low-income children of color.

> Racially based factors are rarely part of the public discussion regarding the "teacher quality" mandates of No Child Left Behind.

NCLB calls for "highly qualified teachers" to teach the core academic subjects (English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography). The aim is to assure this standard of highly qualified teachers for all local education agencies by 2005-2006. The law defines a "highly qualified" teacher as one who

- Holds a bachelor's degree;
- Either has obtained a full state teacher certification or has passed the state licensing exam and holds a license to teach;
- Has not had any certification or license requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis.

Additional criteria are stipulated for teachers based on the school level taught and years in the profession, as the following chart illustrates.

These appear, at first glance, to be universally acceptable standards of who should teach in America's schools. Although they were not universally adhered to, these standards were the normal expectation before NCLB was enacted. Teachers generally have a bachelor's degree (all states and the District of Columbia require this, according to NCLB), have demonstrated knowledge of what they teach (30 states require a test for elementary school teachers, and 31 states and the District of Columbia require subject-area tests for middle and high school teachers, according to NCLB), and have been licensed by their state.

Of course, these are all important to teacher quality. Despite these expectations, however, teacher quality in school districts across the country—particularly in

	Elementary School Level	Middle & High School Level
Teachers New to the Profession	Pass a state test that demonstrates subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading/language arts, writing, mathematics, and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum	Pass a state test in each academic subject area in which the teacher will teach OR Successfully complete an undergraduate major, a graduate degree, or course-work equivalent to an undergraduate major or advanced certification or credentials
Teachers Not New to the Profession	Meet the above requirements AND Demonstrate competence in all academic subjects taught through a high, objective, uniform state standard of evaluation	Meet the above requirements AND Demonstrate competence in all academic subjects taught through a high, objective, uniform state standard of evaluation

core urban settings where students are predominately low-income children of color—does not begin to meet federal standards. Enter the central role of race.

Racial Overtones and Undertones: NCLB makes bold declarations about issues of students and race, such as closing achievement gaps between students of color and their white peers, and demanding that states report testing data along racial lines. However, the law is virtually silent when it comes to the role race plays in the classroom regarding teachers. With few exceptions, the following description applies to teachers who teach low-income children of color across the nation.

> *She is white and from a suburban or rural hometown; monolingual in English; she selected her college for its proximity to home, its affordability and accessibility. She has traveled little beyond her college's 100-mile radius. She prefers to teach in a community like the one she grew up in. She hopes to teach middle-income, average (not handicapped or gifted) children in traditional classroom settings.*[59]

In district after district this portrait holds true, with a few exceptions, where there are large numbers or even a majority of students of color. In states like California, for example, where there is a majority of students of color (64 percent) and a linguistically diverse student body, 75 percent of the teachers are white.[60] In Milwaukee Public Schools, the teaching force is 71 percent white,

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while the student body is 81 percent students of color.[61] Teachers of color "currently represent about nine percent of U.S. public school teachers, but that number is expected to drop to less than five percent in the coming years."[62] Despite many efforts across the country to diversify the teaching force through school district recruitment efforts and alternative routes into teaching offered through universities and colleges, also encouraged by NCLB, this pattern is remaining stable or worsening.

> Classes in high-poverty schools are 77% more likely to be assigned to an out-of-field teacher than classes in low-poverty schools.

When we step back to view the full picture of teacher quality in urban schools, we cannot help but conclude that the norm is unqualified teachers, who are usually white and are usually assigned to teach children of color. The Executive Summary of NCLB states that "nationwide, six percent of teachers lack full certification, but the proportion of uncertified teachers is higher in high-poverty schools."[63] One education researcher notes, "Classes in high-poverty schools are 77 percent more likely to be assigned to an out-of-field teacher than classes in low-poverty schools."[64] According to Stanford professor Linda Darling-Hammond, "Nationally, in schools with the highest minority enrollments, students have been found to have less than a 50 percent chance of getting a mathematics or science teacher with a license and a degree in the field that they teach."[65]

The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning found that schools with the lowest passing rates on California's High School Exit Exam have more students of color and twice as many under-prepared teachers than higher scoring schools. The study goes on to state, "The sad truth is that those students who

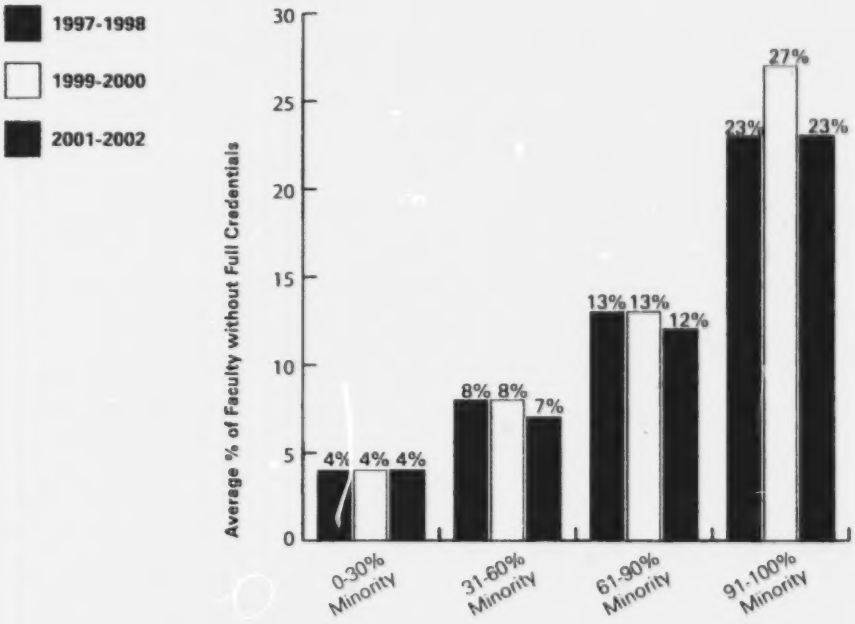
> "Students who need the most help have the least-trained and least-experienced teachers to help them succeed in a system with very high stakes."

need the most help have the least-trained and least-experienced teachers to help them succeed in a system with very high stakes."[66] The accompanying graph exposes the racial dimension of this situation, illustrating that as the percentage of students of color within a school increases, the percentage of credentialed teachers decreases.

States are required by NCLB to submit an annual report that includes the credentials of its teachers, how many teachers hold emergency or provisional credentials, and the percentage of classes not taught by "highly qualified" teachers. They are also required to determine to what extent inexperienced, uncertified, or out-of-field teachers are teaching low-income students and children of color. States and local education agencies must create plans to increase teacher quality as mandated by NCLB regulations.[68] The plans must insure an equitable distribution of highly qualified teachers throughout the state. Finally, NCLB has a "parents' right to know" mandate for providing information pertaining to the qualifications of a child's teachers.

However, states are not required to report the racial composition of their teaching force and its implications for teacher quality. Given the increase of students of color in schools, the need for teachers of color is paramount. Teachers of color can, for example, provide role models for students of color. They can break down negative images of authority and social status that are taught implicitly to all students, such as the image that teachers are white while paraprofessionals and custodial workers are people of color. They can help all students view academic knowledge through various racial lenses. A diverse

WHO GETS QUALIFIED TEACHERS? [67]



Source: *California's Teaching Force: Key Issues and Trends 2002*, Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning.

teaching corps also means that students will be presented with a variety of perspectives and interpretations of academic content.

The National Bureau of Economic Research found that students of color and white students alike score higher on exams when they are taught by teachers who share their racial background, scoring three to four percentile points higher on standardized reading and math tests than their peers whose racial backgrounds are different from the teacher's. The impact was particularly noticeable among low-income students, students with inexperienced teachers, and students of color in highly segregated schools.[69]

> The assumption is that if teachers are better tested and credentialed, they will be capable of alleviating the achievement gap between children of color and their white counterparts.

Further complicating these issues are tensions between union locals that seek to protect against involuntary transfers of experienced teachers and a district's need to assign high-quality teachers to the neediest schools. Prior to the NCLB mandates, many school districts failed to affirmatively address these issues. How the law plans to enforce its intent to provide access to quality teachers in light of these competing interests is not clear.

NCLB Assumptions about Teacher Quality and Racial Equity:

Clearly, failing to meet the mandates of NCLB has consequences for schools, school districts, and states. But there have been accountability measures in previous educational policies, and yet racial inequity continues to plague our public school system. The following four assumptions, which form the basis for some of the teacher quality regulations in NCLB, need to be closely questioned to reveal the hidden racial dimensions of NCLB.

Assumption 1: The teaching force can be overwhelmingly white AND high quality

As many anecdotal experiences can attest, white teachers can provide students of color with a rich and academically sound educational experience. However, NCLB assumes that despite an increasing racially and culturally pluralistic society, maintaining an overwhelmingly white teaching force has no relationship to academic achievement for students who are unlike their teachers in terms of race, class, language, and culture. Comparing student test scores to the percentage of teachers of color would allow this assumption to be examined. Such data can be useful in determining whether the teach-

ing force becomes less diverse under NCLB and how this changes the nature of teaching and academic achievement.

Assumption 2: Testing teachers assures teacher quality

NCLB assumes that adding teacher tests to existing standards will prepare white teachers to teach low-income students of color. To examine this assumption, the following data are necessary:

- Racial percentages of the teaching force by state and school district;
- Student test scores traced to a teacher's race and score on the content knowledge test;
- Qualitative student and teacher stories about the cultural and racial climate in schools as it relates to effective teaching and learning experiences.

Answers to these questions may give more insight about the ability of tests to ascertain the depth of a person's knowledge and teaching skills, and point to broader issues of staff development and support. Thus the data can be useful in investigating whether NCLB standards and mandates can produce better teachers, particularly for low-income students and children of color.

Assumption 3: Teacher credentials equate to high student achievement

The assumption is that if teachers are better tested and credentialed, they will be capable of alleviating the achievement gap between children of color and their white counterparts. Necessary data to analyze this assumption include (1) student test scores traced to the teacher's race and test score on content knowledge and (2) teacher test scores traced to graduation, expulsion, suspension, and college admission rates. These data can illuminate whether teachers meeting NCLB criteria for teacher quality outperform others in producing high academic achievement, particularly for low-income students and children of color.

Assumption 4: Universities and colleges can prepare the new teaching force mandated by NCLB

NCLB assumes that universities and colleges are capable of producing a highly qualified teaching force. One way to monitor the validity of this assumption is to track the percentages of college graduates from each institution and the ability of each institution's graduates to close the academic achievement gap. These data can help universities and colleges learn from

the most successful institutions in producing teachers who possess this essential ability. Such data will also assist the teaching profession to emphasize ability to close race, cultural, and class-based achievement gaps in a new definition of teacher quality.

Conclusion: The definition of teacher quality must be modified to better fit today's educational context. Obtaining college degrees, passing standardized teacher tests, and being credentialed by a state are not enough to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse students in our public schools. To give the American people the whole picture of NCLB, particularly of the education of low-income children and students of color, we must ask and answer questions about how the law confronts issues of race within schools.

REPORTER QUESTIONS ON TEACHER QUALITY

1. What are school districts doing to attract and retain a diverse population of high-quality teachers? What is being done to provide experienced teachers to the neediest students?
2. Can a bachelor's degree, state certification, and test of content knowledge assure that the typical teacher can effectively teach students across lines of race, class, and culture? What is the relationship between passing a content knowledge test and the ability to teach a diverse student population?
3. Is teacher retention different by race? Are academic expectations different by race?
4. Will teacher data be transparent and disaggregated by race? Can improved academic achievement be traced to other possible teacher quality measures, such as being bicultural and/or bilingual?

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND'S READING MANDATES

"Reading First" provides significant grants (the total amount was $900 million for 2002) to improve reading instruction in the early grades. All teaching materials, books, assessments, and professional development paid for in full or in part by Title I funds must be grounded in "scientifically based" research. State applications will be reviewed by an expert panel, which will make funding recommendations to the Secretary of Education and provide comments and technical assistance to the states.

DOES RESEARCH SUPPORT THE CLAIM THAT THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF HIGHLY STRUCTURED PHONICS PROGRAMS IS NEEDED TO CLOSE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP?

The National Reading Panel (NRP) produced a summary booklet of its findings for parents and teachers, which claims that "systematic phonics produced significant benefits for students kindergarten through sixth grade." However, the NRP did not consider studies focused on racial and cultural factors, differences in learning styles, linguistic histories, and the influence of peers and socioeconomic contexts on learning.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH PRESCRIPTIVE READING PROGRAMS?

The effect of using highly prescriptive reading packages is the loss of flexibility—the ability of classroom teachers and schools to select teaching materials and methods that respond to individual differences in children's learning, culture, or language. The educational interests of all children—but particularly those who are poor and of color—are at risk of being compromised as decisions about testing and reading programs are based on one-size-fits-all federal mandates.

HARRY CUTTING

READING INSTRUCTION

WHEN the words "literacy" or "fundamentals" are introduced into conversation, what immediately comes to mind is not math, geography, history, or the arts, but reading. Children's ability to read—to take meaning from print and communicate with others—is considered the key to school success and the gateway to virtually all other areas of knowledge and learning.

This section addresses the following:

- What are the basic controversies over reading instruction and why do they persist?
- What are the testing and "Reading First" provisions of NCLB Act?
- Will the NCLB testing and reading provisions benefit children of color and reduce the achievement gap?

Controversies over Reading Instruction: Controversies over approaches to teaching basic language literacy are not new. They persist over time because they are rooted in differences in cultural and political beliefs and values. As individuals and as a society we hold contradictory beliefs about the ways children acquire language and become literate; about what children can and ought to read; about the importance of racial, cultural, and language differences in the selection of content and teaching methods; and about the role public education should play in fostering cultural diversity and democracy.

For many years liberals and conservatives alike assumed that despite divisions on these issues, the choice of teaching methods and materials was a local mat-

ter, left to teachers and educators at the school and district levels. Today, if schools and districts are to receive Title I funds, they must be prepared to accept federal control over reading curriculum and methods. The No Child Left Behind Act in effect federalizes curriculum decisions, transferring power from local boards, communities, and teachers to state and federal governments.

There are three identifiable approaches to teaching reading in U.S. schools:

Direct phonics instruction. According to the National Reading Panel, direct phonics instruction has two aspects: (1) systematic acquisition of a sequence of discrete phonics skills and (2) their application to reading.[70] The fundamental assumption of a systematic phonics-based approach is that all students need direct instruction in a predetermined sequence of letter-sound relationships. Racial, cultural, and language differences are seen as unimportant.

The No Child Left Behind Act in effect federalizes curriculum decisions, transferring power from local boards, communities, and teachers to state and federal governments.

Whole language (also called a "literature-based" or "constructivist"). This approach emphasizes the importance of learning from context and draws upon learners' previous experience and their capacity to use visual and textual clues. The assumption is that children bought up in print-rich environments grasp the elements of phonics—the association of spoken language with alphabet symbols—from their daily lives, their active experience with books, and conversations about books with peers and adults. This approach may use regular phonics instruction but rejects the idea that all children must master a fixed sequence of discrete phonetic skills *before* they are capable of reading "real" books.

Critical literacy. Advocates of "critical literacy" expect children to go beyond taking meaning from print to develop a capacity to reflect on experience and the texts they read, and to make judgments about the texts and the world around them. A clear line cannot be drawn between critical literacy and whole language perspectives. Both stress the need for children to compose their own texts, to attend to differences in situation and context, and to connect texts with lived experience. Both assume that race, culture, and language matter in the choice of curriculum materials and classroom activities. The emphasis of critical literacy is not only on students becoming literate and informed, but on becoming actively engaged in the cultural, social, and political life of their communities.

Variations of these three emphases coexist today, sometimes within a single classroom. The sequential, direct teaching of phonics is common in U.S. schools. Though fully developed "whole language" programs are relatively few, curriculum and methods associated with this approach are widely used and accepted. Aspects of a critical literacy approach exist in public schools, but coherent examples of such practices are found in a relatively small number of independent progressive schools and within some alternative public schools, special programs, and charter schools.

No Child Left Behind Provisions: Two sets of provisions in NCLB—the testing and "Reading First" provisions—have a major impact on how schools teach reading.

Testing provisions

NCLB requires annual reading assessments in grades three through eight and beginning in 2005-2006 at least one assessment in grades 10 through 12. States may select or design their own reading assessments, which must be "aligned" with the states' language and reading standards. Beginning in 2002–2003 states must also participate in biennial National Assessments of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading and mathematics for fourth and eighth graders, and use the data to "...examine the relative rigor of state standards and assessments against a common metric."[71] In effect, NAEP tests become the national standard for measuring the quality of schools, teaching, student academic achievement, and for distributing rewards and sanctions.

> NAEP assessments are afflicted with validity problems that are no less serious than those in standardized tests now mandated by most states.

NAEP is standardized tests that the federal government administers to a national sample of students. NAEP do not provide scores for individual students or schools. Test results are released to the public as a "report card" on the nation's public schools. Data are disaggregated by poverty, race or ethnicity, disability, and English proficiency.

The use of NAEP as the standard, however, is problematic. The tests were not designed to be used for this purpose,[72] and the proficiency levels set are arbitrary and excessively high. For instance, on the 2000 NAEP reading assessment only 32 percent of U.S. fourth graders scored at the "proficient" level or above, but U.S. nine-year-olds in a 27-nation comparison ranked second.[73] In addition, NAEP assessments are afflicted with validity problems that are no less serious

than those in standardized tests now mandated by most states. Neither group is grounded in actual academic performance nor has predictive value.

The "Reading First" Program

The Reading First program is modeled on a Texas program that President George W. Bush introduced when he was governor. It was incorporated into NCLB with a promise of "ensuring that every child can read by the third grade."

Reading First provides significant grants to improve reading instruction in the early grades,[74] with the condition that all teaching materials, books, assessments, and professional development paid for in full or in part by Title I funds must be grounded in "scientifically-based" research, a term that appears 111 times in the text of NCLB. In practice this requires a federal panel and the Office of the Secretary of Education to certify that the approach to teaching reading and the professional training offered to teachers must be "scientifically based." They must be consistent with what the Bush administration claims are the findings of the 2000 National Reading Panel (NRP) report.

> Grand claims about what science says should be greeted with skepticism, particularly in an arena as complex and contentious as reading.

The NRP report was released in April 2000, along with a 32-page summary booklet and video "ideal for parents, teachers, and anyone concerned about reading instruction and how to better teach children to read." When Education Secretary Paige announced "Unprecedented Reading Reform" for U.S. schools in April 2002, he cited the findings of the National Reading Panel as the "scientific" foundation of the Reading First program.[78]

What Does the National Reading Panel Report Conclude?

Grand claims about what science says should be greeted with skepticism, particularly in an area as complex and contentious as reading, where there are vested interests within and outside of government, billions of dollars in products and services at stake, and firmly held ideological and cultural differences with respect to child development, learning, teaching, and the purpose of public education.

Although government sources repeatedly cite the superiority of a phonics emphasis as beyond question, a reading of the full NPR report indicates that this conclusion is false. Though the panel members chosen were highly likely to favor phonics, the full report, which runs well over 500 pages, includes

WHO'S WHO ON THE NATIONAL READING PANEL

IN 1997, Congress authorized the creation of a National Reading Panel (NPR) whose charge was to identify best practices in reading instruction. The Director of the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) appointed the panel in consultation with the Secretary of Education. The chief of the branch that commissioned the NPR is G. Reid Lyon, Ph.D., a specialist in learning disabilities, a longtime advocate for direct, sequential phonics instruction and Bush's educational advisor on reading since his years as governor. He testified to a Congressional committee in 1997,[75] prior to the convening of the panel, that scientific research has definitively proven the superiority of systematic phonics instruction in early reading. Congress mandated the panel be composed of "leading scientists in reading research, representatives of colleges of education, reading teachers, education administrators, and parents." In fact, there were 12 university professors, eight of them researchers. There were no researchers or reading specialists who did not share Lyon's research perspective. Only one person represented parents. There were no teachers of early reading. There was one middle school teacher on the panel and one principal, Joanne Yatvin,[76] the only panel member who openly held a different perspective on early reading instruction. When the report of the National Reading Panel was released in April 2000, Yatvin refused to sign on, charging that the panel had misrepresented the evidence that was examined, and contrary perspectives on reading and reading research and literacy were ignored or never examined.[77]

numerous caveats against heavy-handed emphasis on phonics drills. In several places the report urges "balance" and increased opportunities for early readers to be "immersed in print" and to have ready access to real books and quality literature. The NRP produced a summary booklet of the report for parents and teachers, which claims that "systematic phonics produces significant benefits for students kindergarten through sixth grade." But the booklet blatantly contradicts the full report, which states, "There were insufficient data to draw any conclusions about the effects of phonics with normally developing readers above first grade."[79]

The most striking limitation of using the NRP report to guide policy is that the panel chose to ignore a large body of research on reading and language that does not fit its criteria for "scientific" research. The panel restricted its analyses and

conclusions to what it called "experimental" research, that is, research that randomly assigns "subjects" to an "experimental" or "control" group, and that expresses all variables and outcomes in quantitative terms. "Experimental" research excludes studies of teaching of reading as it occurs in natural settings; virtually all established forms of systematic observational and interview research; and most, if not all, quantitative and qualitative studies conducted by linguists, cultural anthropologists, sociologists, reading researchers, and cognitive, developmental, and clinical psychologists.

> Schools that are first in line for a truncated curriculum are those that serve children of color, children who are poor, and those who have special developmental needs.

Among the numerous studies excluded from the panel's analyses are those that focus on the connections between writing and learning to read, student attitudes and motivation, and on the effects of "print-rich" and "print-poor" social environments on learning to read. Also ignored were close-in descriptive, clinical, observational, and interview studies of students with special developmental needs, longitudinal case studies, studies of the impact of race, racism, and cultural and language differences on language acquisition and early reading. Finally, the panel chose not to address inequities between rich and poor, and whether schools have the human and material resources necessary so that all children are afforded the opportunity to learn to read. This includes availability of physical facilities, books, teaching materials, qualified teachers, places to read, access to tutoring, and well-provisioned school and public libraries.[80]

Race and the Achievement Gap: The stated intent of NCLB is to raise educational standards and reduce inequalities in the nation's schools. What are the effects of the law's testing provisions, which rely on standardized tests to measure reading proficiency? An accumulating body of independent research suggests that the negative consequences of NCLB testing policies far outweigh the presumed benefits and should these policies continue, the effects will be devastating in terms of the quality of teaching and learning and the achievement gap.[81] The best proponents can do is point to modest gains in test scores, but even these small gains are questionable. They are predictably erratic and flatten over time. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that changes in test scores reflect actual changes in school quality.

The educational significance of shifts up and down of a few points will continue to be debated by policy makers, the public, and the press. However there is little dispute over the effects of government mandated testing on the quality

and breadth of the school curriculum. Whatever does not contribute directly to short-term gains in test scores is marginalized—writing, literature, critical thinking, interdisciplinary studies, music, the arts, physical education, and forms of multicultural curriculum and bilingual education that are not add-ons, but are integral to the entire curriculum. Centralized testing policies have the effect of discouraging local initiatives from integrating multicultural perspectives and anti-racist pedagogy into the curriculum. Schools that are first in line for a truncated curriculum are those that serve children of color, children who are poor, those who have special developmental needs, and those raised in homes where standard English is a second language.

The pressures to raise standardized test scores translate to increased time and resources devoted to test preparation, replacing all other forms of reading and language instruction and professional development with highly structured phonics programs that federal officials certify as "scientifically based." Schools increasingly adopt commercially available packaged programs such as Open Court, Reading Mastery (the successor to DISTAR), and other highly scripted programs that almost entirely teach children to read through a structured and intense focus on phonics. Such programs are heavily marketed as meeting the "scientifically based" requirement of NCLB and therefore consistent with the recommendations of the NRP report. The U.S. Department of Education and Bush's educational advisor Lyon readily approve these programs even though the NRP report explicitly cautions against "phonics programs [that] present a fixed set of lessons scheduled from the beginning to end of the school year," and the lack of flexibility and developmental and cultural appropriateness offered by commercial programs.[82] As already noted, however, officials and government documents misrepresent the panel's already questionable conclusions.

> The denial of educational opportunity and access that is not based on performance—on what a person knows and can actually do—is a form of institutional racism.

Within the NRP report no evidence supports the view that a direct instruction, phonics approach is effective with poor children or so-called "at risk" students.[83] Whether these programs work as claimed will remain in dispute; however, the NRP report does not support the claim that scientific evidence proves that highly structured phonics programs help close the achievement gap. This is partly because studies that focused on racial, social, and cultural factors did not fit the panel's experimental research model and hence the NRP did not consider them. The NRP ignored language studies that examined differences in cul-

ture, learning styles, family wealth, linguistic histories, and peer and adult influences on language development.

The effect of using highly prescriptive reading packages is the loss of flexibility—the ability of classroom teachers and schools to select teaching materials and methods that respond to individual differences in children's learning, culture, or language. The educational interests of all children—but particularly those who are poor and of color—are at risk of being compromised as decisions about testing and reading programs are based on the interests and political influence of major textbook publishers.[84]

Finally, the increased use of standardized tests as the measure of reading proficiency raises profound questions about the credibility of current standardized test technology. The validity issue is central. Do the tests measure what they purport to measure? Is there, for example, a connection between performance on a reading test and actual reading, that is, between a test score and a child's interest in reading and his or her ability to take meaning from text and to communicate thoughts, ideas, and feelings? The failure to address the test validity question raises serious concerns about the tests' misuse. Since standardized tests are often used as gatekeepers to determine, for example, eligibility for promotion and access to advanced classes, the tests disproportionately exclude students of color, the poor, and those not raised in standard English-speaking households.

The denial of educational opportunity and access that is not based on performance—on what a person knows and can actually do—is a form of institutional racism. Because the technology of standardized tests inflates differences that often have little or no educational significance, and because there are no demonstrable connections between performance on a standardized reading test and academic performance, the use of standardized testing to measure reading proficiency and assess school and teacher competence serves to reinforce institutional racism.

Horace Mann, the U.S. educator in the mid-19th century who fought to establish the common school, free and open to all, spoke of his vision of public education as "the great equalizer," the great "balance wheel of the social machinery" that would lead to the disappearance of poverty and with it the "rancorous discord between the haves and have nots."[85] Will NCLB advance this vision of the common school or it more likely to undermine Mann's vision? Final answers are not yet known, but key questions must continue to be asked.

REPORTER QUESTIONS ON READING INSTRUCTION

1. Are provisions made to address students' developmental, learning, and cultural differences? Is test prep replacing writing, oral language, and other aspects of a balanced reading and language program?
2. Section 1905 of NCLB limits the extent to which federal officials can influence state and local curricula, instructional content, standards, and assessments.[86] Is this provision to preserve local community control being adhered to? Are parents and students being fully informed of their rights that allow for waivers, exemptions, modifications, and accommodations in assessment practices?
3. Are there independent reviews of scientific claims made about curriculum materials and staff development programs that are purchased with Title I funds?
4. What is the quality and accessibility of school and local public libraries? Are the collections and required texts reflective of the backgrounds and cultures of the students?
5. Are standardized tests being used as the only or primary measures of reading proficiency by a school or district?

APPENDIX

GLOSSARY OF COMMONLY USED EDUCATION TERMS [87]

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): The state must determine whether schools (as well as districts and the state overall) are making "adequate yearly progress" (AYP). AYP is enough annual progress to get all students in the school and in key subgroups—each racial/ethnic group, low-income students, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency—to a proficient or advanced level by 2014–2015. While states determine their own standards of proficiency, NCLB has a precise method for determining AYP. For the 2002–2003 school year, the statewide AYP target for each subject[88] is equal to the higher of the following: (1) the statewide proportion of students proficient in the state's lowest achieving subgroup; or (2) the proportion of all students proficient in those schools that are at the 20th percentile[89] of achievement in the state. Each state must then raise this target number in equal increments at least three times to reach 100 percent proficiency by 2014–2015. A school will make AYP only if the proportion of all students in the school *and* the proportion of students in each of the identified student subgroups are at or above the target in each subject. (There is a "significant progress exemption" for any year in which a student subgroup, even if it has not reached the target, has closed 10 percent of the gap in the percentage of students in that subgroup who are not proficient and there is progress on one other academic indicator.)

Accommodations and Adaptations: Modifications in the way assessments are designed or administered so that students with disabilities and limited English proficient students can be included in the assessment. Assessment accommodations or adaptations might include Braille forms for blind students or tests in native languages for students whose primary language is other than English.

Alignment: The process of linking content and performance standards to assessment, instruction, and learning in classrooms. One typical alignment strategy is the step-by-step development of (a) content standards, (b) performance standards, (c) assessments, and (d) instruction for classroom learning. Ideally, each step is informed by the previous step or steps, and the sequential process is represented as follows:

Content Standards ▸ Performance Standards ▸ Assessments ▸ Instruction for Learning

In practice, the steps of the alignment process will overlap. The crucial question is whether classroom teaching and learning activities support the stan-

dards and assessments. System alignment also includes the link between other school, district, and state resources. Alignment supports the goals of the standards, i.e., whether professional development priorities and instructional materials are designed to achieve the standards.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA): The aggregate attendance of students in a school during a reporting period (normally a school year) divided by the number of days that school is in session during this period. Only days on which the students are under the guidance and direction of teachers should be considered days that school is in session.

Bilingual Education: With the passage of No Child Left Behind, the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 came to an end. Formerly Title VII, the section of the law that addresses the needs of English language learners is now Title III, The English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act. Title III consolidates the 13 bilingual and immigrant education programs into a state formula program once appropriations reach $650 million.

Criterion-Referenced Assessment: An assessment where an individual's performance is compared to a specific learning objective or performance standard and not to the performance of other students. Criterion-referenced assessment tells us how well students are performing on specific goals or standards rather that just telling how their performance compares to a norm group of students nationally or locally. In criterion-referenced assessments, it is possible that none, or all, of the examinees will reach a particular goal or performance standard. For example, "All of the students demonstrated proficiency in applying concepts from astronomy, meteorology, geology, oceanography, and physics to describe the forces that shape the earth." Standard-based assessments or tests are criterion-referenced tests based on what a state's standards say students in particular grades should know and be able to do. Newer tests often combine multiple-choice questions with other questions that require written answers.

Cut Points: An assessment score at which scores above or below qualify as different levels of proficiency. For example, if the cut point for "advanced proficiency" is 100, scores at or above that level qualify as such. Scores below 100 would fall into the "basic proficiency" or a lower category.

Corrective Action: When a school or school district does not make adequate yearly progress, the state will place it under a "Corrective Action Plan." The plan will include resources to improve teaching, administration, or curriculum. If failure continues, then the state has increased authority to make changes to insure improvement.

Disaggregated Data: "Disaggregate" means to separate a whole into its parts. In education, this term means that data are sorted into groups of students according to race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English language proficiency, gender, ability, etc.

Diverse Schools: Evidence at the state level indicates that subgroup rules under NCLB may result in heterogeneous schools being sanctioned simply because of their diversity. For schools to be eligible for California's Governor's Performance Awards Program (GPAP), for example, all subgroups within a school had to reach their Academic Performance Index (API) growth target. Because all subgroups must achieve proficiency, NCLB and California's awards program "are analogous to a system that makes every school flip a coin once for each subgroup, and then gives awards only to those schools that get a 'heads' on every flip," says Tom Kane, professor of Economics at UCLA. "Schools with more subgroups must flip the coin more times and, therefore, are put at a purely statistical disadvantage."

Dropout: A dropout is a student who was enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year, was not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, has not graduated from high school, or completed a state or district-approved educational program; and does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions: has transferred to another public school district, private school, or state or district-approved educational program; is temporarily absent due to suspension; or has died (see **Event Dropout**).

Early Reading First: A nationwide effort to provide funds to school districts and other public or private organizations that serve children from low-income families. The Department of Education will make competitive six-year grants to local education agencies to support early language, literacy, and pre-reading development of preschool-age children, particularly those from low-income families.

Education Agency: An education agency is defined as a government agency administratively responsible for providing public elementary and/or secondary instruction or educational support services.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA): ESEA, which was first enacted in 1965, is the principal federal law affecting K–12 education. The *No Child Left Behind Act* is the most recent reauthorization of the ESEA.

Event Dropout: Event rates calculated using the October Current Population Survey data for a certain year measure the proportion of students who dropped out between October of that year and October of the previous year. The event rate is determined by counting all persons in a certain age range (e.g., 15 to 24 years old) who were enrolled in high school in October of the previous year but had not completed high school and were not enrolled in

grades 10 through 12 a year later. This count is then divided by the total number of persons in the age range who were enrolled the previous October to compute the rate. High school is completed when the person either earns a high school diploma or an alternative credential such as a GED.

Flexibility: The No Child Left Behind Act gives states and school districts unprecedented authority in the use of federal education dollars.

Graduate, High School: A high school graduate is defined as a person who has received formal recognition from school authorities, by the granting of a diploma, for completing a prescribed course of studies in a secondary level school. This term does not include other completers, or high school equivalency recipients, or GED recipients.

Graduate, Regular High School: A regular high school graduate is defined as an individual who received a regular diploma recognizing the completion of secondary school requirements during the previous school year and subsequent summer school. It excludes high school equivalency and other diploma recipients, and other high school completers (e.g., those granted a certificate of attendance).

High School Completion Count: A count of graduates and other high school completers, including regular diploma recipients, other diploma recipients, other high school completers, and high school equivalency recipients.

High School Equivalency Certificate: A formal document certifying that an individual met the state requirements for high school graduation equivalency by obtaining satisfactory scores on an approved examination and by meeting other performance requirements (if any) set by a state education agency or other appropriate body. One particular version of this certificate is the GED. The GED (General Education Development test) is defined as a comprehensive test used primarily to appraise the educational development of students who have not completed their formal high school education, and who may earn a high school equivalency certificate through achievement of satisfactory scores.

High-Stakes Tests: High-stakes tests are tests that result in significant consequences for students, teachers, or schools. Tracking (course placement), grade promotion, and graduation are examples of consequences for students, while financial rewards or loss of accreditation are consequences for schools. In some states, such as California, individual teachers received financial bonuses when their students' test scores improved.

Individualized Educational Program (IEP): A written instructional plan for students with disabilities designated as special education students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—Part B. This includes statement of

present levels of educational performance of a child; statement of annual goals, including short-term instructional objectives; statement of specific educational services to be provided and the extent to which the child will be able to participate in regular educational programs; projected date for initiation and anticipated duration of services; appropriate objectives, criteria, and evaluation procedures; and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether instructional objectives are being achieved.

Local Education Agency (LEA): A public board of education or other public authority within a state that maintains administrative control of public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state.

Migrant Education Program Summer-Term Projects: Projects that use Migrant Education Program (MEP) funds to provide instructional and/or support services to migrant students during the summer.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP): An independent benchmark, NAEP is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what American students know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, The National Center for Education Statistics has conducted NAEP assessments in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, and the arts.

National Reading Panel (NRP): In 1997, Congress asked the Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) at the National Institutes of Health, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, to convene a national panel to assess the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read.

For over two years, the NRP reviewed research-based knowledge on reading instruction and held open panel meetings in Washington, D.C., and regional meetings across the United States. On April 13, 2000, the NRP concluded its work and submitted *The Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read*, at a hearing before the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education.

National School Lunch Program: This program is a federally assisted meal program operated in public and private nonprofit schools and residential child care centers. To be eligible, a student must be from a household with an income at or below 185 percent of the poverty level for reduced-price lunch or at or below 130 percent of the poverty level for free lunch.

Norm-Referenced Tests: A standardized test designed primarily to compare the performance of students with that of their peers nationally. Such tests do

not generally measure how students perform in relation to a state's own academic standards.

Opportunity Gap: The extent to which educational resources (funding, quality teachers, small classes, rigorous curricula, up-to-date textbooks and facilities, etc.) are unequally distributed to schools that predominantly serve students of color versus those that serve mostly white students.

Percentile (score): A value on a scale of zero to 100 that indicates the percent of a distribution that is equal to or below it. For example, a score in the 95th percentile is a score equal to or better than 95 percent of all other scores.

Phonemic Awareness: The ability to hear and identify individual sounds—or phonemes—in spoken words.

Phonics: The relationship between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language.

Public School Choice: Under NCLB, students in failing schools will have the option to transfer to better-performing public schools in their districts. In some states, such as Arkansas, students in failing schools will also be able to enroll in the Arkansas Virtual School pilot program. The school districts will be required to use a portion of their Title I funds to provide transportation to the students. Priority will be given to low-income students, but all students are eligible for this program.

Resource Room: Students who receive special education services fall into this category if they are outside of their regular class more than 21 percent of the school day and less than 60 percent of the school day.

Revenues from Federal Sources: Revenues from federal sources include direct grants-in-aid from the federal government; federal grants-in-aid through the state or an intermediate agency; and other revenue that, in lieu of taxes, had the tax base subject to taxation.

Revenues from Intermediate Sources: Revenues from an educational government agency, which should have independent fund-raising capability; that is, not a local education agency or state agency, e.g., New York's Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

Revenues from Local Sources: Include taxes levied or assessed by an LEA; revenues from a local government to the LEA; tuition received; transportation fees; earnings on investments from LEA holdings; net revenues from food services (gross receipts less gross expenditures); net revenues from student activities (gross receipts less gross expenditures); and other revenues (textbook sales, donations, property rentals).

Revenues from State Sources: Revenues from a state government source, including those that can be used without restriction, those for categorical purposes, and revenues in lieu of taxation.

Scientifically Based Research: A central concept in the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 is that federal funds should support programs and strategies that are backed by "scientifically based research." Some education experts, however, caution that what is deemed "scientific" is often influenced by politics.

Standard Deviation: The standard deviation measures the spread of a set of data around the mean of the data. In a normal distribution, approximately 68 percent of scores fall within plus or minus one standard deviation of the mean, and 95 percent fall within plus or minus two standard deviations of the mean.

Standardized Tests: Tests administered and scored under conditions uniform to all students. In addition to multiple-choice tests, oral and essay exams can be standardized measures.

State Education Agency: An agency of the state charged with primary responsibility for coordinating and supervising public instruction, including setting of standards for elementary and secondary instructional programs.

Status Dropout Rate: A cumulative rate that estimates the proportion of young adults who are dropouts, regardless of when they dropped out. The numerator of the status dropout rate for any given year is the number of young adults ages 16 to 24 years who, as of October of that year, had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled. The denominator is the total number of 16- to 24-year-olds in October of that same year.

Subgroups: Subgroups are student populations (e.g., African American, English language learners, students with disabilities, etc.) within a school or school district. Under *No Child Left Behind*, all subgroups of students must make significant test score gains for their school to make "adequate yearly progress."

Supplemental Services: Outside tutoring or academic assistance that, under NCLB, students from low-income families who are attending schools identified as failing for two years will be eligible to receive. Parents can choose services for their child from a list of state-approved providers. The school district will purchase the services using a portion of its Title I funds.

Test Reliability: The degree to which the results of an assessment are dependable and consistently measure particular student knowledge and/or skills. Reliability is an indication of the consistency of scores across raters, over time, or across different tasks or items that measure the same thing. Thus, reliability may be expressed as (1) the relationship between test items intended to measure the same skill or knowledge (item reliability), (2) the rela-

tionship between two administrations of the same test to the same student or students (test/retest reliability), or (3) the degree of agreement between two or more raters (rater reliability). An unreliable assessment cannot be valid.

Test Validity: The extent to which an assessment measures what it is supposed to measure and the extent to which inferences and actions made on the basis of test scores are appropriate and accurate. For example, if a student performs well on a reading test, how confident are we that the student is a good reader? A valid standards-based assessment is aligned with the standards intended to be measured, provides an accurate and reliable estimate of students' performance relative to the standard, and is fair. An assessment cannot be valid if it is not reliable.

Title I: The nation's largest federal education program, with a 1995 funding level of $7.2 billion. Created in 1965 during the War on Poverty, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act serves remedial education programs to poor and disadvantaged children in nearly every school district in the country. Amendments to the law in 1994 were designed to tie the program to school wide and district wide reforms based on challenging academic standards. Title I was formerly known as "Chapter 1."

Transferability: A new ESEA flexibility authority that allows states and local educational agencies (LEAs) to transfer a portion of the funds that they receive under certain federal programs to other programs under Title I.

RESOURCES

Organizations

American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research: Education
Topics: Curriculum, Character
Lynn Cheney, Senior Fellow
1150 Seventeenth Street, NW
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Phone: 202.862.5800 Fax: 202.862.7177
Email: lcheney@aei.org
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Cato Institute's Center for Educational Freedom
Topics: School Choice, Federal Education Policy
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www.cato.org

Center for Law and Education (CLE)
Topics: Title I, Students with Disabilities, School-to-Career Programs
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1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 510
Washington, DC 20009
Phone: 202.986.3000 Fax: 202.986.6648
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Civil Rights Project, Harvard University
Topics: Special Education, Dropouts, Segregation
Alison Harris, Information Officer
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124 Mt. Auburn Street, Suite 400 South
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Phone: 617.384.9398 Fax: 617.495.5210
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National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)
Topics: Language Minority Students, Bilingual Education Professionals
Delia Pompa, Executive Director
Phone: 202.898.829 Fax: 202.789.2866
www.nabe.org

National Center for Fair & Open Testing (Fair Test)
Topic: Standardized Testing
Monty Neil, Executive Director
342 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139
Phone: 617.864.4810 Fax: 617.497.2224
Email: monty@fairtest.org
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National Center for Schools & Communities at Fordham University
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Phone: 212.636.6617 Fax: 212.636.6033
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Thomas B. Fordham Foundation
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ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education
Institute for Urban and Minority Education
Topic: Curriculum Issues
Box 40, Teachers College, Columbia University
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Email: eric-cue@columbia.edu
http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu

Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing/UCLA
Topics: Standards and Assessments
301 GSE&IS, Mailbox 951522
300 Charles E. Young Drive North
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1522
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www.cse.ucla.edu

RAND Education
Topic: Objective Analysis of Education Policy
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1700 Main Street
Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138
Phone: 310.393.0411, ext.7515 Fax: 310.451.7039
Email: education@rand.org
www.rand.org/education

Governmental Organizations and Resources

Education Commission of the States
Topic: Education Policy for State Leaders
700 Broadway, #1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
Phone: 303.299.3600 Fax: 303.296.8332
www.ecs.org

National Center for Education Statistics
Topic: Repository of U.S. Education Data
http://nces.ed.gov/

National Governors Association
Topic: Implementing No Child Left Behind Provisions
NGA Center for Best Practices
Hall of States
444 N. Capitol Street
Washington, DC 20001-1512
Phone: 202.624.5300
www.nga.org

National Reading Panel
Topic: Reading Instruction
6100 Executive Boulevard, Room #4B05
Bethesda, MD 20892-7510
Phone: 301.496.6591 Fax: 301.480.7773
www.nationalreadingpanel.org

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Email: info@townhall.com
www.townhall.com

National Networks of Community-Based Organizations

Applied Research Center (ARC)
3781 Broadway
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Email: tjohnson@arc.org
www.arc.org

ARC partners with community-based organizations in the following states: Alabama, Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Montana, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Washington.

Coalition of Essential Schools (CES)
Vanessa Coleman, Director
1814 Franklin Street, Suite #700
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Phone: 510.433.1912 Fax: 510.433.1455
Email: vcoleman@essentialschools.org
www.essentialschools.org

CES has affiliate schools in the following states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin.

Public Education Network (PEN)
601 Thirteenth Street, NW Suite 900 North
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202.628.7460 Fax: 202.628.1893
Email: pen@publiceducation.org
www.publiceducation.org

PEN sponsors Local Education Funds in the following states: Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, Washington DC, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

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88. The state target must be set separately for reading/language arts and for mathematics. In addition, the state may set separate numbers for each school level—elementary, middle/junior high, and high school—based on the achievement data for that level.

89. This involves (1) rank-ordering all the schools in the state by the proportion of all students in the school who are proficient, (2) moving up the line starting with the lowest achieving school until you get to the point where you have included 20 percent of all students in the state, (3) looking at the last school added to reach this point, and (4) taking the proportion of students who are proficient in that last school.

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